

There is a story to be found behind each mountain scene in the Wuyang Scenery Reserve.

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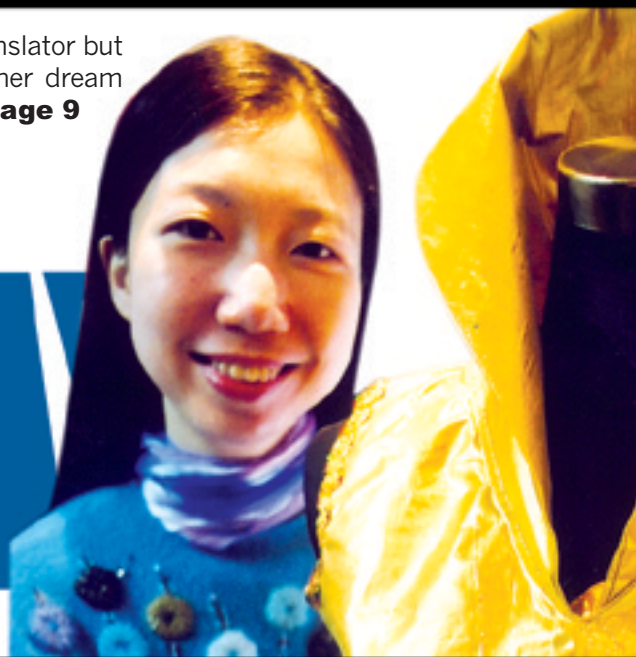
Renovations are underway on the Forbidden City despite heated debate over the seven-year refurbishment plan.

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She failed to be a translator but succeeded in nurturing her dream of fashion design.

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Agenda Set for First National Party Congress of 21st Century

The preparatory meeting of the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the first meeting of the elected Congress Presidium were held in the Great Hall of the People yesterday afternoon.

Jiang Zemin presided over the preparatory meeting attended by 2118 delegates.

The following agenda for the Party congress, which will run from November 8 to 14, was announced by the preparatory meeting:

— Hear and examine the re-

port of the 15th CPC Central committee;

— Examine the work report of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection;

— Deliberate and pass a draft amendment to the Constitution of the Communist Party of China;

— Elect the 16th CPC Central Committee;

— Elect a new Central Commission for Discipline Inspection.

The meeting also elected Hu Jintao as secretary-general of the Party Congress. Ding Guangen, Luo Gan, Zeng Qinghong and Wang Gang were chosen as

deputy secretaries-general of the Party congress, Ji said.

The spokesman added that the 16th CPC National Congress would be followed by the First Plenum of the 16th CPC Central Committee, at which a new term of CPC central leadership would be elected.

After the Plenum, newly elected Standing Committee members of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee will meet foreign and Chinese journalists, he said.

The congress is also expected to make strategic arrangements

for the overall advancement of China's reform and opening up and socialist modernization drive, as well as for the overall advancement of the grand project of Party building in the new century and the new development stage.

(Xinhua)

The congress work staff introduces preparations for the congress to foreign media representatives.

By 5 pm on Wednesday afternoon, a total of 1,375 Chinese and foreign reporters had applied to cover the congress. Xinhua Photo



Poster Girl Grows up

By Chen Ying

A young woman whose face is known nationwide is now trying to step out of the limelight so that the assistance she has received in her life will be available to others. However, her altruistic wish has proven complicated to realize.

Su Mingjuan, the former poster girl for the Hope Project, China's most influential charity program, wrote a letter last month to the China Youth Development Foundation, the organizer of the project, asking them to halt their support of her college education through a "Star of Hope" scholarship.



The famed photo remains powerful.

Photo by Xie Hailong



Photocome Photo

'I should learn how to be independent and complete my study career by my own effort. The money that the project intends to give me should be given to other students who need it more urgently.'

— Su Mingjuan

The 19-year-old is currently a finance major at Anhui University, which accepted her application after she passed the national college entrance exam in July this year.

Su became a household name when her face was used for Hope Project posters published in the early 1990s that portrayed the urgent need to deal with illiteracy among children in remote villages.

On April 8, 1991, photographer Xie Hailong went to mountainous Jinzhai county in Anhui Province to see how the Hope Project was doing in helping kids that had to give up their studies. A picture he snapped of Su started her path to fame as the representative of Hope Project.

That photo, which emphasizes Su's large, innocent eyes over the slogan "I want to go to school" has touched thousands and inspired countless Chinese to donate money to the education charity.

It seems that in the young woman's mind, however, the time has come to take command of her own destiny. "My dream to go to college has come true because of the care and help from the Hope Project over many years. After entering college, I should learn how to be independent and complete my study career by my own effort. The money that the project intends to

give me should be given to other students who need it more urgently," she wrote in her letter.

Su added she saw going out on her own as an opportunity to grow through getting a part-time job or participating in more social activities.

"Su Mingjuan just wants to study in order to graduate smoothly," said a spokesman from the propaganda department of Anhui University.

Meanwhile, the charity insists on continuing to fund Su's education until her graduation day. Officials of the Anhui Province Hope Project Office visited her at the university after receiving her letters. Cao Yong, director of the propaganda department of the Anhui Province Hope Project Office, said the China Youth Development Foundation, Anhui Province Youth Development Foundation and Anhui Province Hope Project Office, agree that her university education should still be supported.

"We appreciate and want to encourage Su's idea. But there will still be many

difficulties ahead if Su Mingjuan tries to graduate on her own strength. We'll continue to help her finish her college career," said Cao.

According to a *Southern Daily* comment on the case published on November 5, giving money or scholarships is only one method to help poor children receive education, while it is more important that beneficiaries receive hope, confidence and a sense of independence. So, in some ways, Su's move may be the realization of the ultimate goal of charity work.

From its launch in October 1989 to the end of 2001, the Hope Project raised over 2 billion yuan in donations, helped 2.49 million children from poor families to continue their schooling and provided Stars of Hope Scholarships to a total of 20,543 students. Though marred by allegations of corruption, the organization has also funded the construction of over 8,890 Hope primary schools in poverty-stricken regions and enabled over 6,000 village primary school teachers to receive further training.

Next Generation TOEFL Triggers Revolution

New Oriental School confronts threat in training market for new version of English test

By Li Hongyu/ Xiao Rong

On the eve of the launch of the next generation of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Hong Kong and Beijing-based TideTime Group seemed to get the leg up on New Oriental School, which used to dominate China's English language training market.

TideTime Group announced on October 23 its authorization by US-based Educational Testing Service (ETS), the designer and administrator of TOEFL, to be the sole distributor in the China region of LanguEdge Courseware, a CD-ROM instructional tool that will give students a glimpse of the next generation of TOEFL.

The debut of LanguEdge marks the first of ETS's three-phase rollout of the next generation of TOEFL, according to the organizations' press release.

The second phase will begin in 2003, when officials will introduce a new TOEFL speaking test. Then, in 2004, which will mark the test's 40th anniversary, the next generation of TOEFL, TOEFL CBT2 with integrated skills, will be unveiled.

"We will open up the market very carefully to avoid the kinds of copyright disputes that formerly arose between some domestic training organizations and ETS," said Zhang Jiwei, CEO of TideTime Group.

In June, New Oriental School, the leading private English testing training organization in the domestic market, admitted to accusations made by ETS that it published unauthorized materials on the TOEFL and GRE exams. The company may have to pay up to 30 million yuan in compensation to the American testing non-profit.

When asked to comment on ETS's accrediting TideTime Group as the sole distributor of LanguEdge Courseware, Yu Minhong, chairman of New Oriental Group, said that authorizing the training program for exams is a total violation of market rules.

"As a non-government educational testing and measurement organization in America, ETS cannot accredit any organization to be engaged in any related training programs. By taking such steps, students that are trained will have a significant privilege over others in the exam, going against the principle of fair play," said Yu.

He added that New Oriental tried to negotiate with ETS throughout last year to get authorized teaching materials and test questions, but the talks were unsuccessful due to divergent ideas on prices.

ETS has completely refuted New Oriental's claims of foul play.

"LanguEdge is targeted at improving the English language abilities of students instead of being only exam-oriented. The earlier it comes to China, the more Chinese students will learn from it," said Susan Chyn, International Office business developer in charge of Asia and the Pacific Rim at ETS.

She added that instructors in English language classes will be able to use LanguEdge Courseware to help their students build and assess communicative English skills and understand what is coming in the next generation of TOEFL.

"Colleges and universities are demanding tests that utilize real-life communication scenarios, not just vocabulary, reading, and speaking tests," said Marilyn Rymniak, executive director of the TOEFL program.

The new version of the TOEFL test will simulate real language experience at a university and have students perform tasks they typically would have to do in a classroom in order to test how they can actually communicate in an academic setting, according to Rymniak.

TideTime CEO Zhang Jiwei claimed that short-term intense training programs targeted at getting high marks on the new TOEFL will not work, adding the overall English language teaching system in China should be improved based on the principles used in LanguEdge.

The company is planning both to launch training programs for teachers to learn to use LanguEdge as a professional development tool and to establish authorized LanguEdge training centers nationwide in partnership with universities and training organizations.

"We certainly will not give up the testing training market in China, but the greatest market potential lies in making LanguEdge a supplementary training method for the English language teaching systems of universities and colleges," said Zhang.

EDITOR: LIU FENG

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Government Lifts Ban on Share Transfers

China has lifted a ban on the transfer of state-owned and corporate shares of listed firms to investors from overseas.

A recent circular sets out regulations governing the resumption of such share transfers, which were suspended in 1995

due to the lack of laws and regulations at the time.

The circular was issued jointly by the China Securities Regulatory Commission, the Ministry of Finance, and the State Economic and Trade Commission. It stipulates that transfers must comply

with the requirements set out in the catalogue on industry guidelines for foreign investment in China.

Shares relating to industries or types of business where foreign investment is forbidden remain off-limits to overseas

investors. In areas where the Chinese side is required to have controlling shares, it should retain a controlling position after some shares are transferred to overseas investors, according to the circular.

Share transactions must be

approved by the State Economic and Trade Commission if they involve industrial policies and corporate restructuring. Approval from the Ministry of Finance is needed if the share deals involve the management of state-owned shares. (Xinhua)

Doors Open Wide to Overseas Students

By Yan Jianli

All institutions of higher learning in China are now able to enroll overseas students, Beijing Youth Daily reported on Thursday.

According to the Chinese Ministry of Education, more than 400 colleges and universities in China had enrolled overseas students by the middle of this year, and the number of overseas students has been increasing by 5,000 each year.

In 2001, China accepted over 61,000 overseas students from 169 foreign countries and regions, a stark contrast to the 30-odd students from only five foreign countries who came 50 years ago..

The largest numbers of students come from the Republic of Korea, Japan, the US, Indonesia and Germany.

Traditionally, overseas students came to learn Chinese, traditional Chinese medicine and Chinese opera, according to education officials, but now students can choose any area of study and more and more are branching in to new majors offering degrees.

Tsinghua Trains BP Managers

By Zhao Hongyi

Twenty-one senior executives, all from BP's senior management team around the world, received a five-day training program at Tsinghua University last week.

As part of the group's internal training program, BP has organized six training sessions for its 150 senior officials from the world with Tsinghua University. Last week's session was the first. Courses include Chinese politics, history, economy, culture, status quo and policies for development of industries such as power and environment.

The purpose of the program, according to Dr. Gary Dirks, BP's vice president and CEO in China, is to deepen the executives understanding of the business environment of China.

BP has worked with other renowned universities on similar types of programs, such as Harvard, Stanford, Cambridge. "It is the first time an Asian university has hosted such an event," said Dirks.

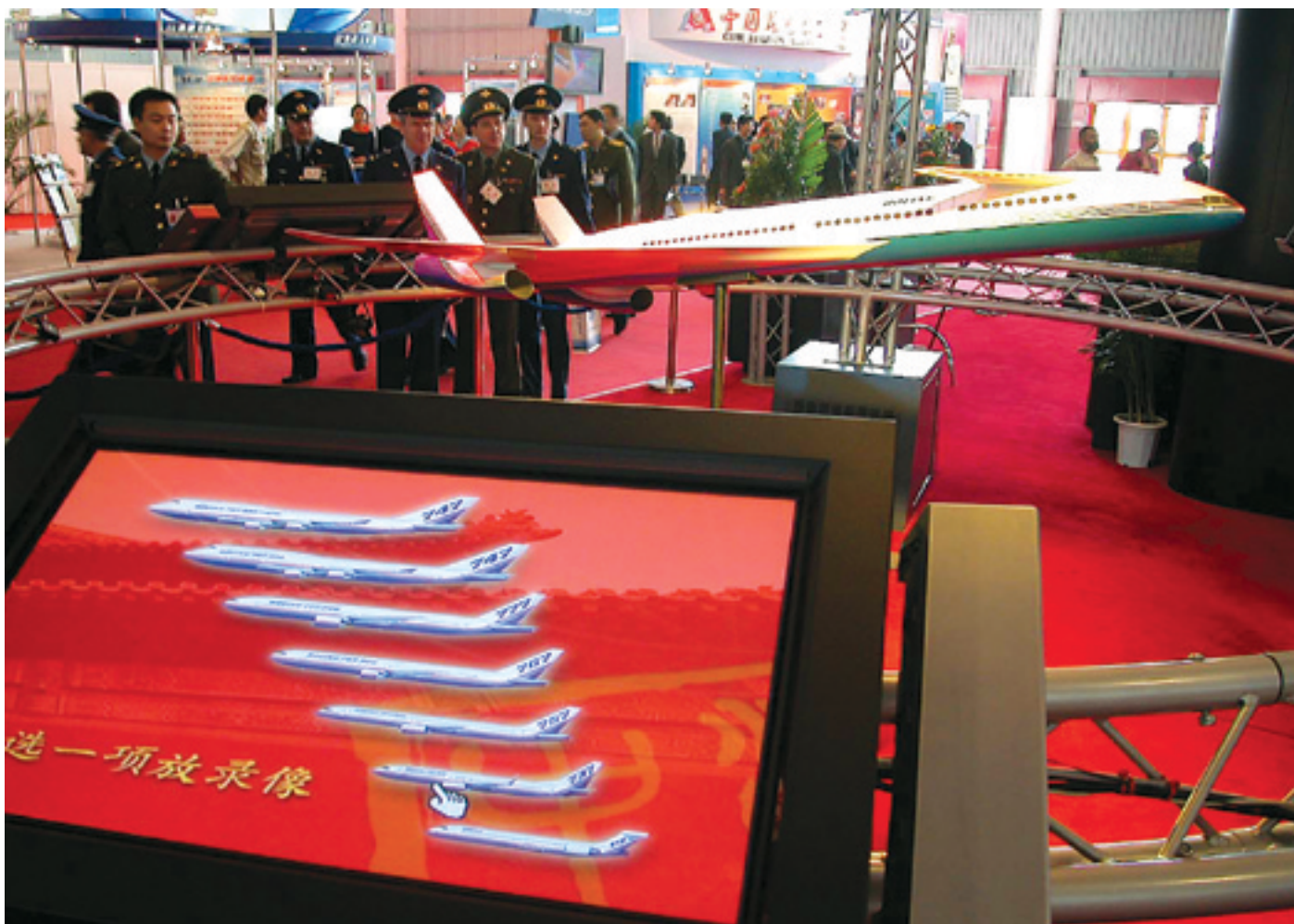
It is also the first time for Tsinghua to host such an event. Professor Hu Dongcheng, vice president of Tsinghua, said the university hopes to continue to play such a role in the world business community. Tsinghua has been a major course provider for senior officials of the central government, and is now exploring a new education market after the successful start of its cooperation with BP.



Free English-learning Website Launched

By Shan Jinliang

A free English-learning website (www.in2english.com.cn) was launched Tuesday. Established jointly by the British Embassy in China, BBC Radio, China Central Radio and TV University and www.openedu.com.cn, the website caters to the needs of employees, teachers, children and their parents with a multimedia online English-learning model. (Xinhua Photo)



Airshow Attracts International Aircraft Manufacturers

The curtain fell on the Fourth China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province today. The four-day show attracted 370 enterprises from 28 countries and regions, including Boeing and Airbus, the world's largest aircraft makers. Pictured is a speed-of-sound airliner displayed by Boeing. (Xinhua Photo)

Aviation and Aerospace Industries to Welcome Foreign Capital

In line with WTO requirements, China will open up still wider to the outside world in the aviation and aerospace industries, says Sun Laiyan, deputy secretary-general of the Chinese Commission of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense.

Speaking on Sunday at the China International Aviation and Aerospace Forum in Zhuhai, in southern Guangdong Province, Sun said the government will encourage and support China's aviation and aerospace firms to actively

develop domestic and overseas markets and make full use of resources from home and abroad to raise their competitiveness.

In the civil aviation area, the government is encouraging Chinese companies to set up individual technology cooperative deals and different types of international technology cooperation, he said.

It is also encouraging foreign partners to share the development of new regional aircraft projects and foreign firms to co-produce with Chinese compa-

nies small-sized aircraft, helicopters and engines. The government is also urging exports of high-tech civil aircraft products and promoting bilateral airworthiness agreements with other countries to promote Chinese-made civil aircraft on the world market.

Meanwhile, the government is encouraging aerospace companies to focus on expanding product exports and services, provided they abide by foreign and national security policies, international treaties and conventions it had signed.

JV to Produce Turbo-fan Regional Airliner

The China Aviation Industry Corporation II (AVIC II) plans to set up a joint venture company with Embraer of Brazil to produce a new 30-50 seat turbo-fan regional airliner.

The new company will be up and running by the end of this year, and delivery of the first products will follow a year later, AVIC II announced Saturday in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, where the China International Aviation and Aerospace Forum was held this week.

The new company will achieve an annual production capacity of 24 aircraft, which is expected to more than meet domestic demand and allow for export of its products.

The Chinese government decided to

develop the 30-70 seat aircraft in 2000. After studying the markets and the technical base of the national aviation industry and analyzing successful frameworks for international regional airliner programs, AVIC II proposed a three-step production plan, which entailed a joint venture for final assembly, local production of components and development of by-products and new products.

The cooperative program is expected to rapidly upgrade the manufacturing capability of China's national aviation industry to meet the growing demands of air transport, said Xu Zhanbin, vice general manager of AVIC II. It will also help AVIC II achieve its goals of design mastery and hi-tech industrialization.

Aviation experts see the launch of the program as an important strategic step for China's aviation industry to develop civil aircraft, and a starting point for civil aircraft production between China and its international counterparts since WTO entry.

Market analyses by regional jet manufacturers show that of the 30-100 seat planes, the greatest demand is for 50-seaters. According to forecasts by China's General Administration of Civil Aviation, regional air transport will expand significantly. During the period of the Tenth Five-Year Plan, China will purchase 110 to 140 regional planes, over 80 percent of which will be 30-60 seaters. (Xinhua)

City Parks Farewell Big Amusement Facilities

By Shan Jinliang

Zhongshan Park will be the city's last traditional park to dismantle all its large amusement facilities, marking the completion of a three-year campaign to restore the natural scenery of these parks.

The Beijing Bureau of Parks and Gardens initiated the campaign in 2000 to remove all large amusement facilities from the city's ten-plus traditional parks, and the work is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year. Beihai Park has just completed dismantling its 17 amusement facilities.

Apart from the classical parks, theme parks such as the Beijing World Park have all followed the requirement from the government to dismantle the big amusement facilities, however they can keep some of the small indoor facilities. Sun Wenqiang from the World Park said, "We will remove

all the facilities if the government requires, but now we keep some of the small ones, since they are not located in the core tourism area of our park."

Beijing began to introduce amusement facilities such as roller coasters and dogem cars from 1986, and their construction was encouraged as a means raising revenue. "As the city's first park to open to the public," said Yang Mingjin, vice director of Zhongshan Park, "we did not count on the facilities to make money, so much as to provide entertainment to the public. The revenue they provide only accounts for 20 percent of the overall income." Yang added the botanic environment of the park would be cleaned up with the removal of the facilities.

Industry experts say the noise, pollution and security risks of the big amusement facilities damage the harmony of the park's natural environment, and these facilities

ruin the botanic and historical image of the traditional parks.

Ms. Ye from the Publicity Department Division of Beijing Zoo, who refused to give her full name, told Beijing Today, "From the viewpoint of the park's long-term development, we will build our theme park into a base for popularizing science, exhibitions and tourism." She said though the zoo's income would be reduced, they would commit to the dismantling to promote the zoo to an international level.

The city has built up a number of amusement centers to provide entertainment to the residents, and more would no longer choose the park as a place of entertainment. Still, some of the industry analysts fear cuts in revenue would affect the regular running of the parks and bring some disadvantage to the children, the main users of the amusement facilities.

MII Ready to Embrace Convergence

By Lily Li

The Ministry of Information Industry (MII) is to enact a law on telecommunication aimed at encouraging a greater variety of investors with foreign and private funds to enter value-added telecom business as part of a plan to create an efficient and open telecommunication market.

Zhao Meizhuang, deputy director general of the Policy and Regulation Department of MII, made the announcement at the first of a series of UK-China E-policy seminars in Beijing last Friday. Co-hosted by MII, the British Department of Trade and Industry and the British Embassy, the seminars focus on the theme of "how should governments and regulators respond to convergence?"

"Since China is in the preliminary stage of telecommunication development and reform, we'd like to draw upon overseas experiences and practice as much as possible to develop ourselves," Zhao said, adding that the department has studied such legislation in other countries and conducted many study tours.

Richard Barrington, director of industry of the office of E-energy in the UK discussed the situation in the UK and gave some advice on the role of the government and regulator. He said, "Government does not work in a vacuum and must be open to the widest possible influences so that where regulation is necessary, it is balanced and workable."

He suggested that industry will be better engaged if government uses incentives to encourage the kind of positive behavior it wants.

Zhang Shu, deputy director general of the Telecom Administration Bureau of MII, welcomed foreign experience and funds as well. He said the MII would follow through on commitments regarding WTO accession to allow foreign funds to enter the Chinese market and run telecommunication businesses. "China will gradually liberalize its telecommunications market and strengthen its regulation of the telecommunications market," he promised. "We will increase transparency of rules and show equal non-discriminatory treatment of all investors and operators."

Restrictions on Domestic Construction to Relax

By Zhao Hongyi

December 1 will be a key day for foreign construction companies seeking access to the Chinese market. The latest regulations issued by the central government grant these companies the right to contract projects in China, though they will be subject to certain limitations.

The regulations, jointly issued by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, together with the Ministry of Construction, stipulate that all qualified contractors with overseas investment are free to contract projects fully covered by overseas investment and grants, projects subsidized and credits granted by international financial institutions and must be opened to public biddings.

Projects that are covered by at least 50 percent overseas investment, or technically too difficult for domestic contractors to handle, will be open to these contractors as well. Projects fully covered by domestic investment but also too difficult for domestic contractors to handle will be treated the same way.

In the past, China's domestic construction market was closed to overseas investment. Exceptions were only seen when domestic contractors could not handle certain technical problems, and foreign contractors were invited on a case-by-case basis.

Statistics from MOFTEC and China Import and Export Bank show that construction companies with overseas funds grabbed a total construction business volume exceeding US \$10.2 billion in 1999, 304 times that of 1979.

New Standard Weeds Out the Lo-Tech Weaklings

By Shan Jinliang

Zhongguancun Science Park is undertaking a large-scale campaign against companies whose tech is not high enough. These companies will now have to work a little harder to qualify for preferential policies on tax, land transfer and import and export tariffs. Officials say it is an effective way to improve the quality of the park's hi-tech companies.

Three years before the Zhongguancun Science Park was established in 1992, the Ministry of Science and Technology issued new policies to encourage technology development in science parks. It stipulated that enterprises listed as hi-tech companies would not have to pay any income tax for their first three years and that thereafter they would enjoy a 15 percent cut in income tax. No import tariffs would be levied on the hi-tech companies if they needed to import raw materials to produce export products and no export tariffs would be collected.

In return, the ministry required the hi-tech companies to invest at least three percent of their sales volume in hi-tech research and product development. To qualify for the benefits, their revenues from technology business and hi-tech product sales had to consist of 30 percent of their overall sales volume.

The policies led to a sharp rise in the number of hi-tech companies in the five science sectors in Zhongguancun, but the annual re-examinations in the following ten years on their hi-tech qualifications revealed some of them were not up to scratch. Some companies were only interested in getting the preferential policies and as the standard for hi-tech companies was not too high, they could get away with fairly paltry innovations.

To improve the general quality of the hi-tech companies, the ministry raised the bar for hi-tech enterprise qualification in 2001 by raising the investment requirement from three to five percent, and raising the hi-tech product percentage of sales volume from 30 to 60 percent.

This drove a large number of the companies in Zhongguancun out of the high-tech enterprise group. The examinations launched this year revealed that of the 1,700 hi-tech companies in the Fengtai Sector and 829 in Changping Sector of the park, 164 and 151 respectively had to have their hi-tech licenses withdrawn.

Lou Huafeng, Publicity Department director of Fengtai Sector said the decline of the overall number of companies would not affect the hi-tech income and trade of the park.

But Song Hong, Enterprise Development Department director of Changping Sector, warned that many new companies would not be able to meet the tougher criteria, and that this could deter their growth.

Inner Mongolia Comes to Beijing

By Tony Shaw

Companies from Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region will be invited to the city following the opening of the Beijing-Inner Mongolia High-tech Enterprise Park on Wednesday.

Located at the Shangdi Information Industry Base of the Zhongguancun Science Park, the park is the country's first experimental unit for developing companies in an area separate from the one where they are registered.

The park covers an area of 177,000 square meters and is able to accommodate 200 companies. Companies that are registered in Inner Mongolia, as well as higher learning institutions, science and research institutes and patent holders from the region, and projects in the fields of medicine, energy-saving and environment protection, and electronic information will all be able to enter the park.

Companies in the park will enjoy preferential policies on housing and tax cuts in their first three years, and overseas experts will enjoy the relevant policies both from the region and the city if they bring projects or investment to the park.

Microsoft IE Browser Supports 3721

By Shan Jinliang

Microsoft announced a new strategic collaboration on keyword service with Inter China Network Software Co, runner of 3721.com, last Thursday, putting a stop to rumors of possible cooperation with its former partner, CNNIC (China Network Information Center).

Chinese netizens can now navigate the web and search for online information by typing Chinese key words or pinyin into the address bar rather than writing in long domain names or website addresses.

Microsoft cancelled its cooperation with CNNIC on September 24, and then barred it from supporting its IE browser. Concerning the change of business partner in China, Microsoft MSN Affairs Department director Ye Weilun said his company would choose the largest business partners in the world market, and their cooperation would be long-term. 3721.com claims to be conducting over 20 million searches a day in China and reaching over 95 percent of Chinese Internet users.

First China-made Ford to Be Sold Next Quarter

By Shan Jinliang

The first Ford car made in China will appear on the market in the first quarter of next year, announced Chang'an Ford Auto Corp. late last week.

Chang'an Ford Auto Corp. is a joint venture established by Ford, the world No. 2 automaker and Chang'an Automobile Group, China's No. 4 automaker. The car will be named Fiesta and will be based on the same platform as the famous Europe-designed Fiesta model. It is an updated four-door auto, modified specially for the Chinese market. Analysts believe the price of the new car will be around 14,000 yuan.

Shell and CNOOC Launch China's Biggest JV

By Zhao Hongyi

It's taken twelve years, but the future's bright, so bright that Shell has decided it's actually a "zero risk" investment. Last Friday, Shell and China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) announced the construction of their US\$4.3 billion petrochemicals complex in Huizhou, Guangdong Province.

The project will be the largest Sino-foreign joint project in the country and one of the leading petrochemical projects in the world. It is expected to begin operations in 2005, producing 800,000 tons of ethylene and more than 2.3 million tons of chemicals and by-products annually. Annual sales are expected to reach US\$1.7 billion.

Long time coming

CNOOC and Shell have been discussing this project since 1990. They signed a joint venture contract in 2000 after a marathon 10 years of negotiations. In the past two years, the two sides have been discussing details of shareholding percentages, environment assessment, project definition and project construction initiatives.

Shell will hold a 50 percent stake in the project, and CNOOC will hold the other half.

The company will build, own and operate the petrochemicals complex and market the resulting products, primarily in China's domestic market.

The plant will be an integrated chemical complex including steam and electricity generation and other utility provisions, with storage, handling and shipping facilities, as well as effluent treatment and environmental protection facilities. The production facilities are being designed to international standards.

China has an annual ethylene production capability of 5.4 million tons. Major ethylene production bases in the country include Daqing in the northeast, Yangzi in Jiangsu province, Qilu in Shandong province and Maoming in Guangdong, each with an annual output of 700,000-800,000 tons. Domestic production reached 4.8 million tons last year. But with annual domestic demand of more than 14 million tons, China must rely heavily on imports.

The CNOOC/Shell Nanhai project, with a designed annual production of 800,000 tons, will go some way towards reducing China's reliance on import of ethylene. This massive guaranteed

demand is also one of the reasons why the board of Shell delivered its zero risk evaluation for the project.

That's not all

It is estimated that the project will bring development opportunities with a potential value of more than 100 billion yuan (US\$12 billion) to down-stream industries.

Other international giants based in the United States, Japan and France have decided to follow Shell's lead and have chosen Huizhou as the location for new overseas investment projects of their own, according to local reports.

"We hope the 27.8 square kilometers project will be one of the largest petrochemical production centers in the world in ten years," said Lu Ruihua, governor of Guangdong province.

Wei Liucheng, president of CNOOC, said, "This project fits with CNOOC's long-term global strategy to develop its downstream business, and is an important step forward in CNOOC's development towards being an international petroleum company, allowing integration of its upstream and downstream business."

"We also hope the project will help in the training of senior management professionals of an international standard," he continued.

Shell: we can do more here

Evert Henkes, chief executive officer of Shell Chemicals Limited, said: "The project fits in with Shell Chemicals' global strategy of focusing on building major petrochemical and polyolefin plants to serve large industrial customers."

Shell has been looking into China's market for oil and natural gas exploration, petroleum refinery and liquid natural gas production and offshore exploration since it came back to the country in the early 1980s. This year, the group started its penetration into China's oil and gas retailing market, establishing gas stations in Beijing and other big cities. The group is bidding for the nearly 5,000 kilometer "West-East Gas Pipeline" project which will transfer the natural gas produced in west Xinjiang to the consuming belts along the coastal areas.

Shell's buy-in on the CNOOC IPO could prove to be particularly significant. It could give the company a toehold in the lucrative but heavily protected Chinese gas station market.

China Telecom Re-launches IPO in Hong Kong

China Telecom re-launched its initial public offering (IPO) in Hong Kong Wednesday with its global offer size cut by about 55 percent to 7.56 billion shares.

The re-launch came a week after its original IPO, which received a poor response from international investors.

In the re-launch, the fixed-line giant will issue 377.82 million H shares to Hong Kong investors, accounting for some 5 percent of the global offer size. The Hong Kong offering will close at noon next Monday.

The offer price remains unchanged at HK\$1.47 to HK\$1.69 while dividend payout stays at HK\$0.065.

Trading of its shares is due to begin on November 14 in New York and a day later in Hong Kong, a week behind its original schedule.

Gross IPO proceeds are cut to between HK\$11.18 billion (US\$1.43 billion) and HK\$12.92 billion (US\$1.66 billion), down from the previous target of HK\$24.86 billion (US\$3.19 billion) and HK\$28.7 billion (US\$3.68 billion).

Because of the smaller number of shares to be issued, China Telecom's prospective earnings multiples will be slightly enhanced to between 9.6 and 11.4 times.

(Xinhua)



China Telecom (USA) Corp. was formally established in Washington D.C. on Monday. China Telecom vice president Chang Xiaobing was present at the official opening.

(Xinhua Photo)

TV Giant Ditches Retailers in Favor of Agents

By Charles Boston

Rowa, one of China's major color TV manufacturers, has rocked the Beijing TV market by restructuring its marketing channel and setting up an agent system. Local press reported that the company was surrendering its share of the color TV market in Beijing after Gome, a major TV and appliance market, started withdrawing Rowa TV products from its shelves.

"It's nothing more than a rumor," said Wu Shaochang, one of the directors of the TV giant which

is based in Huizhou, Guangdong Province, and president of the Hong Kong Great Wall Digital Group.

The rumor was generated partly by the many complaints about Rowa TV set quality that swamped the hotline of the Guangzhou Customers' Association in September. There have also been problems with the company's after-sale service in Tianjin.

Wu said the firm's color TV production lines in Huizhou are continuing as normal, with an annual output of four million sets. A

plasma TV set production line is being installed in Guangzhou and will soon be put into operation. The company says it has no intention of withdrawing from the Beijing market.

The firm made its debut in the Chinese TV market in 1997, backed by the Hong Kong Great Wall Digital Group. On the strength of its reasonable prices, annual sales soon reached three billion yuan.

Rowa is actually readjusting its marketing and distribution system by instituting an agent system. Traditionally, TV producers have conducted marketing themselves and relied on local markets and department stores to sell their products. The markets buy the TVs on credit, charging variable fees and usually demanding discounts in order to boost sales. From now on, Rowa will use local agents to market and distribute their products. The agents will pay on delivery of the sets.

This brings about a fundamental change not only in the internal structure of the firm, but also the traditional pattern by which manufacturers have taken responsibility for marketing. The firm has already established co-

operation with Landao and Xidan department stores in Beijing on the agent basis.

This reform will help quicken the process of information feedback, which the company will receive from the agents, as well as clearing unsold stock and cutting costs by seven percent, according to Wu Shaochang.

The agent system will be finalized by the end of the year.

Wu said that he is confident in Rowa's market share in Beijing with its product quality and post-sale service. The restructuring will by no means affect the quality and its market competitiveness.

The firm produced China's first flat screen, plasma and scanning TV sets. It exports one million TV sets a year and the annual sales at home amount to one billion yuan.

A local economist who requested anonymity said in an interview with *Beijing Today*, "This restructuring of the marketing and distribution system will be quite a challenge for the firm and the conventional retailing system. But if the agency system proves successful, it will have a very positive effect on China's domestic appliances industry."



Rowa TVs now on sale at the Beijing Landao shopping market

Photo by Milly

ASEAN, China Move Toward Free Trade

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Nov. 4 (AP) - China and the 10 ASEAN nations agreed Monday on a timetable for creating a free trade area intended to help all their economies by bringing down tariffs and stimulating investment.

The countries said they would eliminate nearly all tariffs on goods and also move to liberalize trade in services, while opening the way for cross-border investment.

China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations said they will start talking about the tariff reductions early next year and conclude their negotiations by mid-2004.

They envision a free trade area for China and the six most developed ASEAN nations - Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand - by 2010. The four newest members of ASEAN - developing nations Cambodia, Laos,

Myanmar and Vietnam - can put off joining until 2015.

China gave most-favored nation trading status to Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

Analysts' Take:

Lu Jianren, researcher at the Institute of Asian Pacific Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

China would like to strengthen its economic relations with ASEAN countries to demonstrate that its economic development will have a positive impact over the area and is not a threat.

China is the sixth largest trading body in the world, while ASEAN is the fifth. In 2000, the total combined external trade volume of the two parties reached \$1.3 trillion, the joint GDP reached \$1.7 trillion, and the combined population 1.8 billion.

A free trade block between the

two parties will create the world's third largest free trade area after the European Union and North American Free Trade Agreement.

China also hopes to extend its cooperation with ASEAN in all aspects through the so-called "non-traditional security concept," which includes countering trans-border crime, drug smuggling, illegal immigration, piracy and other problems.

He Liangliang, news commentator, Phoenix TV

Regarding ASEAN-China bilateral relations, both sides reached agreements to maintain stability in the South China Sea, further develop the Mekong River Area, realize free trade by 2010 between China and ASEAN's developed countries and free trade by 2015 between China and ASEAN's less developing countries, and to grant most favored nation status to Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

In his meeting with the prime

ministers of South Korea and Japan, Zhu Rongji proposed a free trade agreement among the three countries, an idea first put forth by South Korea. Japan seems hesitant over the issue, at least for the time being.

These two free trade lines would form the East Asia Free Trade Area, or the Eastern Asia Free Trade Community, an idea first thrown out by Singapore.

China repeatedly emphasized that the free trade areas should be open to sovereign countries only. That is why Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan are excluded. But they can participate in free trade under the name of China.

In terms of politics, by strengthening economic and trade ties with ASEAN, China wants to stabilize the situation in the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea to allow peaceful and joint exploration of the natural resources there.

(Zhao Hongyi)

More SEC resignations expected after Pitt

Nov. 6 (FT.com) - Further resignations are expected at the Securities and Exchange Commission as part of a wider shake-up of the main US financial regulator after Harvey Pitt quit as chairman.

Mr. Pitt's resignation, announced as the US mid-term election polls closed on Tuesday night, came after just 15 months in the post. His tenure was marred by political controversy and a series of misjudgments.

Robert Herdman is under pressure to resign as chief accountant at the SEC. William Webster, whose botched appointment as head of the new US accountancy regulator, may also step aside.

(Adrian Michaels in New York and Demetri Sevastopulo in Washington)



Sweden Sets Date for Euro Talks

STOCKHOLM, Nov. 6 (AP) - Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson said Wednesday that Sweden's political parties will start discussions on November 29 to set a date for a nationwide referendum on whether to adopt the European Union's common currency.

Sweden, which joined the EU in 1995, Denmark and Britain have refrained from adopting the euro.

Critics fear a threat to the nation's sovereignty and cradle-to-grave welfare system, which is funded by some of the world's highest taxes, but support for the currency has increased since it was introduced as cash in the other 12 EU countries.

Enron Ex-CFO Fastow Pleads Innocent

HOUSTON, Nov. 6 (Reuters) - Former Enron Corp. Chief Financial Officer Andrew Fastow pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to charges he defrauded the energy trader and its shareholders by creating shadowy outside partnerships that lined his own pockets with millions of dollars.

Fastow, made his plea before US Magistrate Marcia Crone in an arraignment that followed his indictment last week on 78 counts including fraud, money laundering and obstruction of justice. He vowed to fight the charges, which could land him in jail for the rest of his life if he is convicted.

(Erwin Seba)



Xinhua / Reuters Photo

Ford Recalls Nearly 600,000 Vehicles

DEARBORN, Mich., Nov. 4 (Reuters) - Ford Motor said on Monday that it was recalling about 572,795 compact Focus vehicles from the 2000 and 2001 model years because of potential safety problems including engine fires.

The world's No. 2 automaker, has been hurt by high-profile quality problems over the last two years.



Ford Motor Company released a concept drawing on October 7 of the all-new 2004 Mercury Monterey minivan, available for sale in the fall of 2003.

(Reuters Photo)

Chrysler Recalls 500,000 Minivans

DETROIT, Nov. 6 (Reuters) - DaimlerChrysler AG's Chrysler unit is recalling about 500,000 minivans because of a possibly misplaced part that could cause the vehicles' air bags, horns or cruise control systems to fail, the automaker said on Wednesday.

The vehicles targeted in the recall are from the 1996-1998 model years manufactured under the Dodge Grand Caravan, Dodge Caravan, Plymouth Grand Voyager, Voyager and Chrysler Town & Country nameplates, spokeswoman Angela Spencer Ford told Reuters.

Microsoft Bets Big on Tablet PC

SEATTLE, Nov. 7 (Reuters) - After a decade of development, false starts and hundreds of millions of dollars, Microsoft Corp. launched on Thursday its long-promised Tablet PC that allows users to write with a pen.

With the device, a flat laptop-style computer, users can annotate documents, jot down and exchange notes as well as convert them to text or save them as-is.

The company just finished its antitrust case last week, the results of which prevented Microsoft from being split, but the company has to fulfill the requirements raised by the US Department of Justice on behalf of consumers and rivals.

(Reed Stevenson)



Bill Gates shows his new Tablet PC to media in Redmond, Wash. (AP Photo)



Stock traders shout orders in the euro dollar pit at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange shortly after the Federal Reserve announced a half-point drop in a key interest rate on Wednesday. It was the first rate cut this year by the Fed, which hopes the cut will turn around the sputtering US economy. (Xinhua / Reuters Photo)

Fed Cuts Interest Rate Half a Point

WASHINGTON, Nov. 6 (AP) - The US Federal Reserve on Wednesday reduced a key interest rate by one-half of a percentage point as the central bank tries to keep America's stop-and-go recovery from stalling amid rising worries about a war with Iraq.

Commercial banks were expected to respond by moving a benchmark consumer rate to its lowest point since 1959.

The Fed moved the federal funds rate from its already low 1.75 percent, where it had stood for 11 months, to 1.25 percent, surprising many analysts who had forecast a quarter-point move. They believed the Fed would want to

conserve its power to aid the economy, given the bank's aggressive cuts last year that left it with little room to lower rates.

Wall Street had climbed to its highest level in two months in anticipation of a Fed rate and finished Wednesday with the Dow Jones industrial average gaining 92.74 points to close at 8,771.01.

(Martin Crutsinger)

Analysts' Take:

Yuan Yuedong, section chief, Institute of Int'l Finance, Bank of China

The US Federal Reserves lowered the interest rate by 0.5 percent, more

than the 0.25 expected by the market. This shows the Fed's worries over the US economy.

The Republicans' victory in the US Senate and House of Representatives, combined with their control of the White House, means larger budget deficits and a war against Iraq are coming. Together with the country's huge annual \$400 billion of external trade deficit, the US economy is in a gray area, which will put added pressure on the US dollar.

The Fed's rate has now slid to 1.25 percent against 3.25 percent of the European Central Bank and 4.00 percent of the Bank of England. The two European central banks do not want to cut rates, because they are

worried about inflation.

But a strong Euro and pound sterling will put pressure on their exports, which are of critical importance to the area considering their stagnated domestic market and rising unemployment. Reports say the two banks will gather later this week to adjust their monetary policies. Interest rates reductions are forecasted.

However, even reductions by the two banks would not bridge the gaps between the rates.

The world's currency market responded to the reduction yesterday and today, as the euro climbed to \$1.040. The euro will keep this strong position for the next few months, at least. (Zhao Hongyi)

Dollar Broadly Lower as Euro Regains Parity

NEW YORK, Nov. 5 (Dow Jones Newswires) - The dollar was broadly lower across the board Tuesday in New York, enabling the euro to rise back above parity again for the first time since Friday.

In morning trading, the euro was quoted at \$1.0019 in New York. Earlier, the euro briefly broke fresh global session highs against the dollar around \$1.0040.

The European Central Bank and the Bank of England meet later this week after the Fed, and although there are "some mutterings" about the possibility of a coordinated monetary easing by all three, the chances of that are very slim.

(John Parry & Nicholas Hastings)

Analysts' Take:

Yuan Yuedong, section chief, Institute of Int'l Finance, Bank of China

The recent strong performance of the euro against the US dollar is a result of the following factors:

First, the economic indicators for the US' economic growth released recently show a sliding trend. In particular, the consumers' confidence index has shown a real decrease.

Second, the currency markets have been expecting an interest rate reduction by the US Federal Reserve this week. The reduction will widen the interest rate discrepancy between the dollar and the euro, which has

already hit eye-catching gaps between 1.75 and 3.25 percent. Higher interest rates will increase demand for euros and push up their price.

Therefore, the euro's strong performance against the US dollar does not represent strong performance in the EU's economy, but, instead, the weak outlook of the US economy.

Over the mid- and long-term, the US dollar will hold its position.

First, from the viewpoint of basic economic structure, the US economy is stronger than that of the EU.

The EU's economy has structural problems that need to be solved, such as countries' long-established welfare systems that have become a burden to economic growth and

too many traditional industrial production facilities, a bottleneck for industrial upgrading. EU member countries have also struggled to find a unified, standard budget policy.

Sun Xiaofan, chief foreign exchange dealer, Bank of China

Considering the comparative stability and strength of the EU's stock markets and economy compared to those of the US, the ECB's repurchasing of euros from the market (because it thinks the euro has been overvalued), and heavy purchases of euros by a number of Asian countries for their foreign currency reserves, I think the euro will maintain a strong position against the US dollar in the mid-term. (Zhao Hongyi)

Volunteers Help Libraries Open Every Day

By Lily Li

Librarians in Beijing's many public libraries are busier than ever, with the passing of a new regulation requiring libraries to open on weekends as of November 1.

"Thanks to the volunteers who come from all over Beijing to help us, we have sufficient staff," says Ge Ming, director of the lending department of Xicheng Library.

"Libraries are always short of staff," says Ge, "if it were not for the help of volunteers, we could not possibly serve our readers every day."

Gao Mei, a 50-year-old retiree, is one of the volunteers at Xicheng Library. "Though she is retired and no longer young, she comes here without fail every Wednesday," says Ge.

He Weiwei, a senior student at the University of Mining and Technology says, "I often meet her in the library. I didn't know she was a volunteer, she is very knowledgeable about the li-



Readers in Chaoyang District Library

Photo by Cui Hao

brary and every time she gives me a big, warm smile."

Gao Mei is just one of the 178 volunteers who took part in an activity called "Go into the Public Institutions," of which ten large libraries in Beijing were the first beneficiaries. The activity was or-

ganized by the Association of Volunteers of Beijing last year.

In January, the first group of 178 volunteers, selected from nearly 1,000 people, signed on with the association to serve readers in libraries for either a six-month or one-year period. The second group

of more than 140 volunteers began work in June.

Tian Kewu, principle of the Beijing Association of Volunteers, says such activities would develop more rapidly in the future. "Because it shows that the volunteer activities in our country are developing at the same pace as they are internationally."

Not all the volunteers, however, are available to fill all their allotted shifts. "Sometimes I was late because my classes changed or something else happened, I know it's not good but I really have to deal with my own business first," says one male volunteer.

"It's a big problem when volunteers' own work and study conflict the job in the libraries," says Tian, "but our association has recruited 25 mobile volunteers to stand in for those who, for what ever reason, have to arrive late or leave early. I believe this won't be a problem in the future."

Association Offers Comfort to Relatives and Friends of Suicides

By Shan Jinliang

An association has been set up to help relatives and friends of suicides by Huilongguan Hospital, the first of its kind in China.

The Suicides Relatives and Friends Association aims to organize relatives and friends of people who have committed suicide and offer them free professional counseling. "Under the direction of two dozen doctors and nurses of the hospital, they can share their pain with each other, and be comforted by people who have been through the same experience," said Zhang Yanping, one of the organizers.

According to Zhang, the association will organize various kinds of activities to help people, but no specific plans are available yet.

From the beginning of this month, the association is inviting members or volunteers who could work as researchers. Around 30 people have already joined the association, and people can join any time they like, Zhang added.

The hotline for contacting the association is 6271 6497.

Short Changed in Quest for Long Legs

By Chen Ying

The victim of a surgical procedure that left him crippled is suing a Beijing hospital for 230 thousand yuan.

Fed up with his nickname "shorty," 24-year-old Xu Bei (a pseudonym), underwent an operation at Wangjing Hospital after his graduation to lengthen his legs. Two years later, he is in constant pain and can only walk using a pair of crutches.

Desperate to be just a little taller, Xu consulted doctors at many hospitals. He believed he was in luck when he was told by medical staff at Wangjing Hospital that they could lengthen his legs in a procedure from which he would fully recover from within a year without any risk.

In August that year, he underwent surgery on his right leg. The procedure apparently didn't go as smoothly as expected, and follow up treatment, due to start a week later, had to be postponed.

Later examination showed that the operation had severely damaged both the muscle and nerve in his right leg.

In November the same year, the hospital attempted an operation to reverse the damage, but it failed. His right knee and ankle are now misaligned and Xu has been bed-ridden since then.



Photo by Ding Xianzhu

Overweight and Unwanted

By Chen Ying

For the first time, being overweight has usurped poor eyesight as the primary cause for rejection of youngsters seeking to enlist in the army in Beijing this year.

"Let me join! I promise to lose 20 kilograms in one month!" a chubby young man pleaded with Sun Bensheng, vice-director of the Beijing Municipal Enlistment Leading Group at Puren Hospital.

More than two thousand young people lined up for physical examinations in the last enrollment period, of which 45 percent passed the first round. Among those who failed to qualify, 23 percent were eliminated because they were overweight, while about 20 percent failed to make the grade because they lacked 20/20 vision.



Aly Rose

Photol by Qu Liyan

Dancing to a Different Beat

By Su Wei

"I have not spoken English since I came to study at the Beijing Academy of Dance in 1999 and moved into an apartment with some Chinese girls," says Aly Rose.

The young American was recruited by Beijing Normal University recently as a dance teacher after obtaining her masters degree in choreography in June. "No one here knows my English name. They call me Luo Hongmei."

Rose, who says she is tired of telling her story, first visited China in 1994 and says her visit at that time to Anlu, a small village in the north of Hubei, still lingers in her mind.

She says after returning to California to finish her psychology degree, she still missed the pure people she met there and their simple life — no electricity or running water.

"My intuition told me that I should go back to China after my graduation," says Rose. She then bought a one-way ticket to China after selling her car and flat.

"I wanted to come to a place with few westerners, where few people could speak English." She ended up in Guizhou, where she stayed for two years. "I come back every vacation to meet those Miao, Dong and Bouyei people," she says.

Now almost 26 years old, Rose says she is under some pressure from her peers in America to return to do further

study. "I must make a decision — go back to America to continue my studies, or leave the life in America behind me." She says her intuition still tells her to "stay in China and do something new."

Until a choreographer encouraged her to enroll in at the Beijing Academy of Dance after watching her performance in a singing contest in 1999, she had never considered "doing art" in China.

"I am the first formally enrolled foreign student in the university. They asked me to do my 30 page thesis on choreography in Chinese." She says though her written Chinese is good, she still finds it hard to express and explain western ideas in Chinese.

Rose found more challenges from studying Chinese dance, especially the Northeast Yangko — a rural folk dance. "Every movement of the character is different from what I am used to. If I feel unhappy, I would stretch my neck, shrug my shoulders and then shout. But to express anger, the dancer twists her upper body with her hands and head swinging back and forth."

"I like choreography best. I like designing characters myself and creating new things drawing on Chinese traditions."

She says there should be not too much difference between the dances. "Why not combine Chinese folk dances with foreign modern dances? I want to dance and teach young Chinese dancers how to create their own dances."

Residents to Leave Temple

By Su Wei

A family has been ordered to vacate the temple in a Beijing park they have been living in for over 20 years.

The Shijingshan Court ruled last week that the family move out by December 1, and that the park pay them 400,000 yuan compensation.

Qiao Jianwei, vice manager of the operations department of Badachu (Eight Great Sites) Park, in the west of Beijing, near the Fragrant Hills, says the Chang'an Temple cannot be opened to the public with people living there. "We cannot call the park Badachu if only seven sites are open," he said.

According to Qiao, the family moved into the temple when a parking area near the park was to be built. "It happened in the 1970s and the historical reason is so complicated that no one can remember the exact details."

He says the family has been unwilling to move out as "they say they do not have anywhere else to live." He considers the family's presence has prevented the park from properly protecting the ancient trees and carrying out maintenance on the temple.

"We cannot simply say that all the damage and mess has been caused by the family, but the trunk of one of the 300-year-old white-skinned pines has withered. There are only 20 or so such trees in our park."

Yang Shuying, the oldest of the eight residents, says her family should not be held entirely responsible for the situation. "Who likes to live in a temple? If we had a house elsewhere, we would move out without argument."

The family concedes that they have caused some damage to the temple and the trees, but only "to some degree".

According to Qiao, the park did discuss with the family's relocation with the employer ten years ago. "They expressed that they did not want to be actively involved and asked us to talk directly with the family."

The family has never paid rent, even when the park obtained legal ownership of the four rooms of the temple in 1988. "We did negotiate with them about the rent, but they refused."

Yang and seven others have no comment on the park's offer. "We are willing to cooperate with the park and move out. We know we everyone has the obligation to protect the ancient architecture. Our point is that they should give us some economic compensation."

Bottles of Pets

By Lily Li

For those who find cats and dogs just a little too care-intensive, pets-in-bottles may be the answer.

"I prefer to take care of pets-in-bottles because they are clean and don't waste too much of my time. These fish won't die, even when I forget to feed them for months at a time!" says Hu Hai, a secretary, who was buying a fish-in-a-bottle at Xidan market on Wednesday morning, "I now have two fish-in-a-bottle and a flower-in-a-tin at home, all given to me by friends."

Another customer says gifts like these are popular with her colleagues and friends. They call the pets "lucky genii-in-bottles."

Some 10 shops at Longfushi Market, at Xidan Culture Square, sell these low maintenance pets. If fish are not your thing, lizards are also an option, however these might require slightly more regular feeding. Flowers and grass-in-bottle, also available, are sold as a kind of pet you have when you are not having a pet.

"Office workers and college students are our main customers," says Cheng Xiang, who has a stall at Hua-wei market, "fish-in-bottles are the most popular. I can sell eight or nine bottles in half a day." The average price is 40 yuan.

A few people have voiced the opinion that pets-in-bottles are not such a good thing. "How crude people are to keep living creatures in bottles just for their entertainment," said Zhu Kongjing, a teacher at Beijing No. 8 Middle School who was shopping at the market, "If you really love animals, you shouldn't treat them like that."



Photo by Chen Shuyi

Chewing Gum Sold with Mini Rubbish Bags

By Chen Ying

Now when tourists want to buy a pack of chewing gum in Tian'anmen Square, they will receive five little bags to dispose of their chewed gum.

Some one thousand cleaners spent 15 days removing chewing gum wads from the square after the National Holiday. In an effort to protect the environment, the Tian'anmen Administration for Industry and Commerce has issued five thousand disposable bags to the 50 retailers around the square, to give them to customers buying chewing gum.

A Brave New Mobile World?

By Lily Li

Billboards and television spots that have hit the city in the past couple of months make it seem that what was once dismissed as science fiction has become reality.

A new generation of mobile phones equipped with digital cameras can be used to take pictures and instantly send them all over the world. The devices are like something out of a Dick Tracey comic or Blade Runner.

Mobile phones able to take photographs first appeared in the European and Japanese markets in late 2000, and major cell phone makers have since all created their own versions targeted for the China market. At the PT/EXPO COMM CHINA communications technology expo that opened in Beijing on October 29, many manufacturers introduced photo-taking functions as the latest and greatest thing to hit mobile phones.

"Your Life is a Movie," says an ad for the Nokia 6650 handset on the company's website, which claims the phone makes shooting movies easier than ever. The phone's built-in camera can record video at over ten-frames a second and offers a 4096-color display and multimedia messaging service (MMS) for sending and receiving clips.

Some people, however, see this new technology not as a wonder, but as a direct threat to personal privacy. They fear that these mobile phones can be used to surreptitiously take pictures in many inappropriate situations, and then broadcast those pictures to anyone the taker sees fit.

Do photo mobile phones represent a step forward or backward for society? Opinions follow:

Tan Ying, security data technician of the China Academy of Telecommunication & Technology

Mobile phones with built-in cameras were an inevitable result of the improvements of MMS and the adoption of 3G.

It's illegal in China for people to shoot pictures or video inside other people's houses or offices without permission. Plus, it is against the law to use wiretaps and eavesdrop on conversations in non-public places, and it is illegal to take photos or videos of activities held in private. It's not so hard to prevent people from carrying cameras or video cameras into private areas, but how are you going to stop people from carrying mobile phones, and how can you tell if they are using them to take



Mobile phones with cameras took center stage at the PT/EXPO COMM CHINA expo that ran October 29 to November 2. Photo by Wang Zhenlong

pictures or not?

We all need to acknowledge that advancements in technology often come at the price of the loss of some rights.

Xue Jingfeng, doctoral student in the Computer Department of Beijing Technological Institute

High-tech products such as pinhole lenses and built-in cameras make me think of what my mother used to say — "you have to guard against others".

A small screen and a tiny camera are all it takes to see a lot of private affairs. The tape of Qu Meifeng was taken with a pinhole camcorder lens. [Qu Meifeng is a Taiwanese politician who was filmed in bed with her lover with a tiny camera, the recording of which was copied and spread across Taiwan, Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland in a matter of days.]

Many of my classmates say they have seen the footage of Qu and they like it. But when I asked them what they would think if their girlfriends appeared on VCDs nationwide, they all shook their heads and said their right to privacy was of utmost importance.

To my mind, since both built-in cameras and pinhole camcorder lenses offer

people the ability to take sneaky footage of others, the only difference between them is that pinhole lenses have been used to violate people's privacy, while no one has used mobile phone cameras to do that yet.

Zhu Ronghui, CEO of Beijing Beautybeard High Technology Company

Mobile phones with built-in cameras have become very popular in Europe. According to my understanding of Western culture, there are reasons why the photo function has made it in the fiercely competitive market. Western society puts great emphasis on individuality and on the ideas that people are born with rights, including the freedom to act and speak as they please, and especially the right to be respected by others. That kind of value system can stand in the way of the new mobile phones being used to harm others.

But in China, I'm afraid there is always someone who will use illegal ways to get what he or she wants. As these phones become popular, we may find it is impossible to defend our privacy.

I don't mean Chinese people are in-

ferior, only that it's our instinct to look down on and doubt others and nose into others' private affairs. High technology sometimes only supports these habits.

Ma Huan, senior student at Renmin University of China

People use mobile phones to communicate and share things with each other. The ability to take pictures with phones will make handsets that much more effective and fun at sharing information.

This kind of mobile phone is knocking at the door of the market and consumers are saying, "Come in".

I think these kinds of high technology products are a blessing rather than a curse. Plus, phones' built-in cameras have essential differences with pinhole lenses and mini-cameras. Mobile phone cameras can be used only in the immediate area of the phone, while the other kinds can be used in many places without subjects' knowledge. So, taking pictures with a mobile phone is not an invasion of privacy but a form of entertainment.

As I see it, these phones are nothing less than a revolution in the history of communication.

SOUND BITES

"We hope the 16th Party Congress will adopt more open policies toward the growth of non-state sectors. This will make us feel more reassured."

— Huang Jianping, general manager of Weimei Ceramics Co. in Dongguan, Guangdong Province, regarding the opening of the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China today in Beijing

"Your meeting today in this place especially, despite the pains and difficult circumstances that resulted from recent events, sends a strong message to the world that the passing of Rabin does not mean the end of peace."

— Hosni Mubarak, Egyptian President, speaking by video link to 100,000 people at the Tel Aviv rally to mark the seventh anniversary of the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

"We hope the Israeli people will elect a government that can deliver peace."

— Saeb Ereket, Palestinian cabinet minister, regarding Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's calls on Tuesday for early elections to be held on January 28 after the breakup of his fractious coalition

"When you get beat as bad as we've been beat, you've got to look at everything, including the management."

— US Congressman Gregory W. Meeks of New York, a Democrat, regarding his party's defeat in the House of Representatives and the Senate in Tuesday's elections.

By Chen Ying

By Chen Ying

A minor change in economic policy means that private eyes no longer have to work on the sly — from the law, that is.

According to a *Beijing Daily* report of October 28, the State Administration for Industry and Commerce has adjusted its trademark registration classification, including such fields as tattoo art, personal protection and private investigation in its latest commodity and service trademark registration division table.

This means that private dicks can apply to have their companies officially recognized by local and national governments and file for trademarks for their businesses.

Chongqing Bangde Business Information Consultation was the first domestic company to receive legal qualification to conduct private investigations following *Beijing Daily's* report, after its owners filed for approval with the local Administration for Industry and Commerce to expand its business.

Over the past few years, many companies have engaged in the private investigation business, but all have had to do so under false titles such as "investigation center" or "business affairs consultation office", because their activities were marginally legal.

Will the legitimization of the private investigation industry have positive or negative effects on the legal field and on society in general? What are the ramifications of this policy change? Opinions follow:

Li Dongming, graduate student, major in law, University of International Business and Economics

Permitting private detection as a kind of business in China means the government has broken its silence and admitted the existence of this industry. That's a step forward.

Private investigating was always a

Private Eyes Go Public

State administration allows investigation companies to go legit

hidden business around the country until now. Because there were no relevant laws and regulations, many companies ran in secret, despite the huge market potential I see for such services.

The government basically banned detection in the past. Evidence provided by private investigators was only used by people who wanted to solve their problems privately, outside of the courts.

In the beginning of the year, the Supreme People's Court released a new judgment on evidence involved in civil cases, allowing legally-obtained cassette and videotape footage to be used as evidence. That ruling was key to private investigation firms.

In the market, there is definitely demand for detection services. Many people involved in civil cases don't have time to deal with them. Such people can entrust a company to investigate their cases as they like, saving them time and improving their chances of coming out on top.

Shi Lijun, director, Beijing Hangong Civil Action Investigation Office

My company has been engaged in the detective business since the early 1990s. At that time, we were the only private investigation company in Beijing to have permission from the local Administration for Industry and Commerce. I guess it was like a trial run for them.

I believe the legal existence of detective companies is a good thing, showing the development of the law and society. Like lawyers, detectives may become integral parts of the country's legal system in the future.

But that is a process that will take time. The new trademark registration category shows the government has decided to give the green light to this industry, but between questions of how to run such a business and changes in related laws, the path ahead is not clear.

You can find ads for more than 40 companies similar to mine in Beijing in newspapers, but most of them have not registered for a related business trademark with the Administration for Industry and Commerce. Many firms lack a basic knowledge of the law.

Many companies are most concerned about expanding their areas of business, but doing so blindly or using any means to get evidence will only hamper the development of the investigation industry and perhaps even lead to its destruction.

Si Qi, Beijing citizen

My first reaction is that I wonder if private investigation companies can really operate up to standards, since the industry is just emerging. For example, how are employees in this field qualified?

But, I think this represents an inevitable trend tied to the development of the market economy. Though police de-

partments and related law administrations put all their energy into all kinds of legal cases, they are not able to resolve all cases, and must even discard some. Investigators could prove able to complete some tasks needed in cases that government departments cannot accomplish.

A lawyer I know said that he thinks that detectives could be useful if they can, in fact, provide legal evidence needed in court. But he added that in doing so, their career is inherently dangerous, so we urgently need to find ways to protect investigators' safety and benefits.

Ling Xuedong, lawyer, Puze Law firm

It often happens in cases that government authorities, such as police departments and procuratorates, can't provide sufficient evidence for all kinds of reasons. Also, according to the law, lawyers have to get agreements from involved parties before they can conduct searches for evidence. Unfortunately, the answer to such requests is normally "No".

So, in these kinds of circumstances, plaintiffs have to seek help from detectives.

Even though the administration used to forbid the existence of private investigation as an industry, companies in the field found loopholes so that they could do business. That's why so many companies were secretly engaged in

this business in the past.

So, clearly it's a good idea to let these companies do business publicly, as long as the government monitors detectives' quality and qualifications.

Since private eyes' field is related to the law, I don't see how they could do their work correctly or legitimately without some knowledge of the law. At the same time, they also need other skills and knowledge of such fields as psychology.

Some people may think that detectives infringe on people's privacy. But I think that sometimes it is necessary to sacrifice personal privacy in order to protect more people and society at large.

Furthermore, private investigators that do a good job and are effective will push employees in government law departments to improve their performance, which will have a good effect on public safety.

Lee Seok Yoon, South Korean law student

Like in China, private investigation has never been recognized as an industry in South Korea, and I think it's the same in Japan. But, there are still many companies engaged in that business without government permission in my country.

Now some experts and politicians have said it's time to let this industry go public. A legislator from the Han No Ra Party will hand in a proposal to this degree to the congress in the end of the year because he thinks that the world has entered the information age. However, public opinion seems to be against admitting private investigation.

Detecting is a traditional industry in the West. But for my country, I don't support plans to legal the industry. Private investigation should not be considered a separate industry and should be controlled by law enforcement authorities through strict laws. Plus, regulations about this trade should come from the field of criminal law, not economic law.

By Su Wei

Zhang Jufang, a young woman from Gansu who worked as an elevator operator in a community in Haidian, disappeared without a trace six months ago.

"She may be already in the other world," says her best friend Wu, "There were rumors that she may have AIDS." Wu later adds that Zhang said nothing when she questioned her about the rumors, "She just kept saying she had no hope to live."

During the interview with *Beijing Today*, Wu wonders if it is possible for her to have been infected by Zhang, saying that she feels tired all day and has no strength to do anything. "I used to have meals with Zhang together," says Wu, "I do not dare to go to hospital to have an examination. I can not imagine what life would be if I found I had AIDS."

Sexual Partners

Nearly 32% of the surveyed unmarried migrant workers (78% of the total) say they have had one or more sexual partners, including over 13% who described themselves as promiscuous.

Lü Weihua, who runs a dance hall in the north west of Haidian District, came to Beijing six years ago. She says her personal experience enables her to understand why some young migrant women resort to having sex with strangers.

"During the day, they have to work as hard as men to earn a living. But as physically mature women, it is natural that they are eager to be loved and cared for," says Lü.

"The problem is that they are living far from their families and they have few or no friends in the city who are able to bring comfort to them."

She remembers how a young woman who used to frequent her dance hall, whose name she says she has chosen to forget, once told her bitterly that the only way for her to be released from loneliness was through sex.

"The girl said she had lost the ability to become excited about life, except at the prospect of sex," says Lü. "For her, only such physical pleasure could allow her to escape for a while from her perception of herself as just a migrant working girl."

Lü says she still recalls her words — "It is the only opportunity for me to enjoy the sweetness of being alive, otherwise I would go crazy."

Lu Qian, a counselor for the Beijing Psychological Association, says the feeling of loneliness suffered by young female migrant workers may lead to long-term problems.

"It is certain that these women feel lonely when they come to live in a new place, separated from their family and friends. While they may have been inhibited, even over-cautious about sex back at home, loneliness may overwhelm their inhibitions when they find themselves in a strange environment, starved

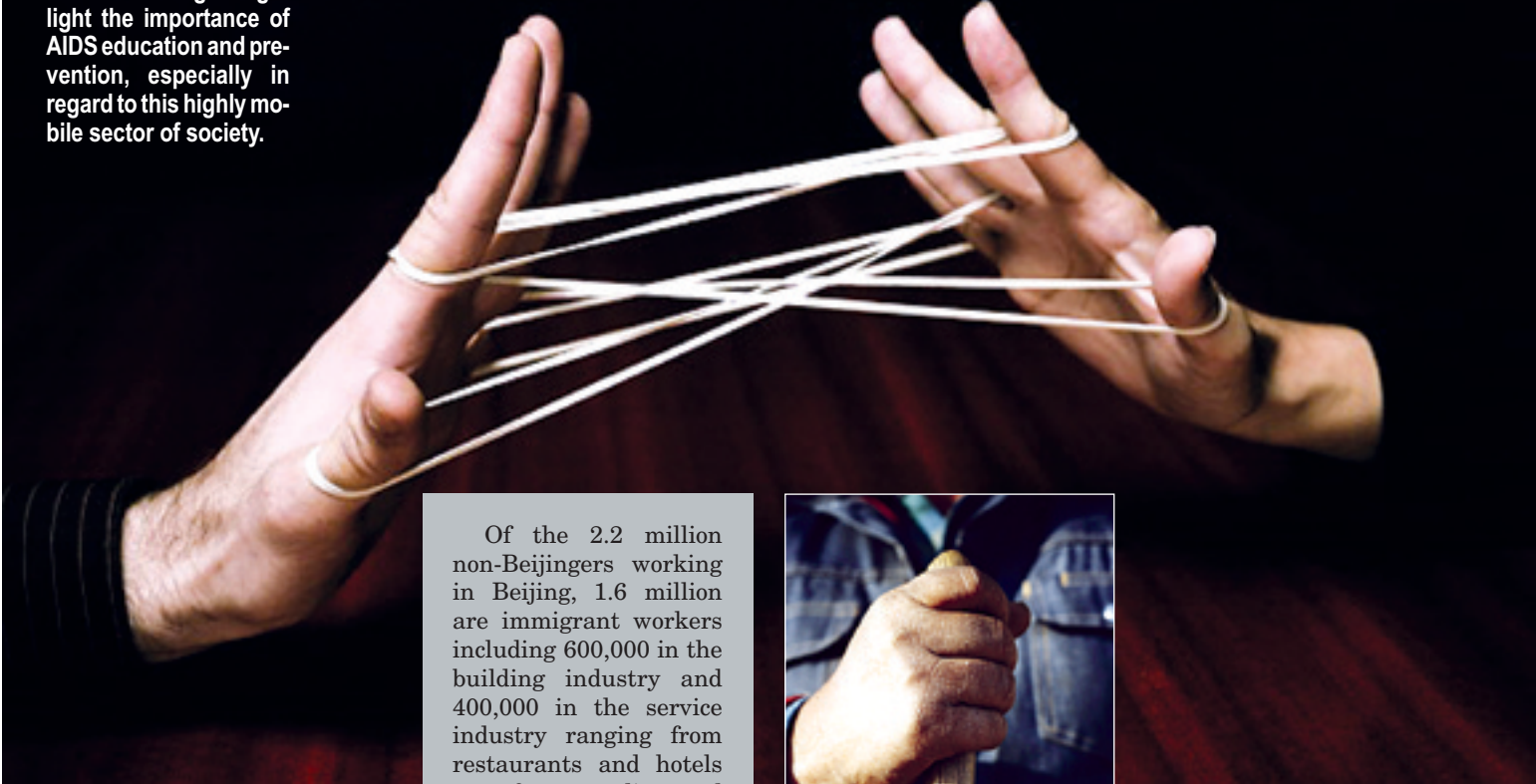
Part of the findings of a two-year research program, titled *HIV/STD Prevention Among Young Migrant Workers in China*, sponsored by the National Institute of Health of the United States, was released in Beijing on October 31 at the First Joint Workshop to Build Research Collaboration.

Over 2,000 migrant workers in Beijing aged between 20 and 46 were surveyed for the program. All of those surveyed came from other provinces, working as construction workers, restaurant staff, security guards and housekeepers.

The findings highlight the importance of AIDS education and prevention, especially in regard to this highly mobile sector of society.

Sex & the City

Sexual health awareness of young migrant workers



Of the 2.2 million non-Beijingers working in Beijing, 1.6 million are immigrant workers including 600,000 in the building industry and 400,000 in the service industry ranging from restaurants and hotels to safety guarding and housemaids.

The total number of immigrant workers in China now has surpassed 100 million, with an annual increase rate of 8 million, according to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.



of human contact," says Lu.

Xiao Yu, a young woman who came to Beijing from Shandong seven years ago says that women such as herself are more receptive and likely to respond to any kind act of a stranger, "We have nothing but we know that we should show our gratitude to those helping us through difficulties, especially economic ones," she says.

Yang Hua, 27, salesman for a company manufacturing VCDs near Zhongguancun, says as the term "migrant workers" suggests, they do not have a real home in the city.

"No fixed address means it is impossible to find someone in the city to get married. We have the same sexual desires as anyone else, but our sexual rights are deprived not only by ourselves but also by society."

Yang says that he once heard that the concept of sexual rights encompasses a broad spectrum of behavior, ranging from rights related to giving birth to self-

gratification, and reading and watching sexual materials. "Neither male nor female migrant workers should be condemned too much for their sexual behavior, except when it concerns money."

Safe sex awareness

Around 65% of the surveyed say they did not use a condom the last three times they had sexual intercourse.

"Why should I use a condom? No one uses them! I do not want to be laughed at. Using a condom suggest we lack trust in each other," were the most common re-

sponses of male migrant workers in Xuanwu and Haidian districts when asked by *Beijing Today* about whether they practiced safe sex.

A young construction worker in Haidian District cursed his girlfriend while speaking to *Beijing Today* at a local hospital. "She has an STD and I am infected too."

He regards it as an accident, simply due to "bad luck." When asked if he will use a condom next time, he makes no reply.

Li Peilin, a colleague of Lu's, says social discrimination also results in the low use of condoms among migrant workers, even though nearby community hospitals and the police stations offer free condoms.

He says he once accompanied a migrant worker to obtain a free condom from a police station, and after witnessing the humiliating procedure the man had to go

through to obtain one, can understand their reluctance to do so.

Inconsistent sexual knowledge

The research reveals that slightly over 50% of migrant workers understand how the HIV virus is transmitted. Nearly 50% say they know they would not contract HIV through sharing accommodation with someone who was HIV positive, however around 70% believe HIV can be transmitted by insect bite.

Another inconsistency revealed by the research is that while fewer than 5% of migrant workers have been tested for HIV and STDs, over 55% say they would have such examinations regularly, given the opportunity, and 86% say they want to know more about HIV and AIDS prevention.

Fang Xiaoyi, professor of the Psychological Development Institute of Beijing Normal University and a partner in the program, says the young migrant workers interviewed seem eager to learn about AIDS and STD prevention.

Ke Wang, a migrant worker living in Tongzhou District, became HIV positive after selling blood. "The HIV examination has become a routine in most of the hospitals at the price of 50 yuan. For STDs, the price ranges from a few dozen to a few hundred yuan. But we can not afford them."

Li Xiaoming also says that the migrant workers are afraid that once they are diagnosed with HIV or an STD, they will be forced to return to their hometowns or required to undergo some form of treatment.

"Losing their jobs and returning home penniless is a terrible prospect. Taking medical treatment is impossible, due to the enormous cost and the fact that they have no medical insurance at all."

Fang considers that social discrimination would be the biggest torment for those diagnosed with HIV. Ke Wang agrees saying, "It would be much better to live like a man though at the bottom of society than like an outcast."

Potential dangers

The research does not indicate the level of risk young migrant workers face in terms of the spread of HIV and STDs, though it indicates that this highly mobile section of society poses a potential health risk.

Zeng Yi, vice president of China's Aids Prevention Foundation says the gap between urban and rural development, coupled with the rapidly improving road networks, mean that cities are both increasingly attractive to rural dwellers, and easier to get to.

"The more opportunity for them to be HIV/ AIDS infected, the more possible that HIV/ AIDS could spread with incredible speed — a severe disaster for the whole society."

Photos provided by Tony Stone

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Damming of the diversion canal on the Yangtze River is completed Wednesday.

Damming of Diversion Canal Completed

Overview of Three Gorges Project

The Three Gorges Project, the world's largest hydropower project, is located near Yichang city on the middle reaches of the Yangtze River.

It was approved in April 1992 and was launched in December 1994.

The Project runs in three phases with a term of 17 years.

- Phase I lasted five years from 1993 to 1997 with a focus on project preparation, first-phase cofferdam construction and digging diversion canals.
- Phase II lasts six years from 1997 to 2003 with a focus on the construction of second-phase cofferdam, hydro electricity facilities on the left embankment and installment of power generation equipment.
- Phase III lasts six years from 2003 to 2009 with a focus on the construction of hydro electricity facilities on the right embankment and completion of power generation equipment installation.

When completed, the reservoir will cover an area of 10,000 square km.

The Three Gorges Project has been designed to harness the Yangtze in the aspects of flood control, power generation and navigation.

Flood history of the Yangtze River

- 1931, floods covered 130,000 square km, affecting 28 million people and killing 145,000.
- 1935, floods covered 89,000 square km, affecting 10 million people and killing 142,000.
- 1949, floods covered 18,140 square km, affecting 8.1 million people and killing 5,699.
- 1954, floods covered 31,833 square km, affecting nearly 19 million people and killing 33,169.
- 1998, floods covered 2,390 square km, affecting 2.3 million people and killing 1,526.

By Ivy Zhang

The diversion canal on the Yangtze built for the passage of ships during the second-phase of the Three Gorges project was fully dammed on the morning of Wednesday this week.

It's a crucial stage in the transition from the second to the third and final phase of the project.

Damming of Diversion Channel

The damming of the man-made channel paves the way for the third-phase construction of the huge hydroelectric dam, 2,309 meters long and 185 meters high.

Lu Youmei, general manager of the China Yangtze River Three Gorges Project Development Corporation, said, "When the natural flow of the mighty Yangtze is stopped near the dam site, the project will begin to play part of its role."

The first two phases of the project were concentrated chiefly along the northern bank. The mainstream of the Yangtze, China's longest river, was first dammed in November 1997.

The construction of the Three Gorges Project, which began in 1993, is expected to be completed in 2009, when 26 power-generating units with a combined capacity of 18.2 million kilowatts will go into operation.

The permanent locks will also be able to accommodate ships of more than 10,000 DWT (dead weight tonnage).

Historic city submerged

The water level will have risen to 135 meters by June next year and the first four generators will have started operation.

Before then, all the residents living below that water level in Chongqing Municipality and Hubei Province shall be moved out of the area.

Fengjie in Chongqing Municipality will be one of the first towns to be submerged.

With eight mighty blasts, nine tower blocks which were landmark buildings in the town were blown up in eight seconds on Monday, signaling that Fengjie's 2,300 years of history was about to come to an end.

The usually bustling streets are now blocked with hills of debris. Only the ancient city gates still stand. Thousands of Fengjie's former residents came to view the razing of the old town.

An old man named Zhang Quanming who has lived in the old town for 60 years could not hold back the tears. "I am sad to see this town disappear," he said.

Fengjie covered 1.4 square kilometers. With its 100,000 people, its population density was higher than that of Shanghai, China's most populous city.

The new town, eight kilometers away, has the same style of old Fengjie but with more modern amenities.

Fengjie has been a major transport hub since ancient China. "The government will move the two ancient gates and Yong'an Palace, a historical site, to the new city," said Liu Benrong, a leader of Fengjie Country.

The excavated cultural relics will be exhibited in a new museum and the streets and statues in the new town will reflect the culture of the old town, said Liu.

Sources: Xinhua, Huashang News, Beijing Youth Daily.



The 2,300-year-old Fengjie city in Chongqing Municipality is demolished Monday to make way for the reservoir.



Fengjie citizens witness the collapse of their former home.



They are leaving too. Photos by Cheng Tieliang, Jiating and Yang Yonghui.



Media Laid Bare

Hong Kong's notoriously prurient media industry found itself in the spotlight this week after *East Week* magazine sparked outrage by publishing a half-naked photo of an actress believed to be Carina Lau.

Sleazy paparazzi snaps are nothing new, but this shot is believed to have been taken during the violent kidnapping of the actress twelve years ago.

The photo was processed with mosaic technology, but in case readers were in any doubt as to the identity of the woman, the magazine ran a story about Carina Lau next to the cover story.

It caused a flurry of interest in rival media publications, which dragged up the story of the kidnapping incident.

This story, it seems, has finally overstepped the mark. A crowd of about 500 people including local entertainment stars such as Jacky Chan turned up outside the Hong Kong government headquarters last Sunday to condemn *East Week* magazine.

Police swiftly listed the magazine as a Class Three publication, meaning that it faces a fine of HK\$1 million and prison terms for those involved.

Albert Yeung Sau-Sing, president of Emperor Group which owns *East Week*, responded by ceasing publication of the magazine and its three top editors offered their resignations.

Sensational scoop!

The photograph shows the movie star naked and obviously in great distress.

The eyes and breasts are slightly obscured but the face and the upper body are still visible. The title reads: "Tragedy inside entertainment circle - naked photo of tortured female movie star exposed."

According to the magazine's report, the photo was delivered to the editorial department by a mysterious man who claimed he wanted to expose the dark side of Hong Kong's entertainment business.

The article speculates the star must have offended someone who then decided to take revenge by kidnapping her and forcing her to take this photo in a car.

Attention soon turned to the mysterious kidnapping incident which befell Lau 12 years ago.

In the early morning of April 25, 1990, Lau was driving alone in Kowloon. She was followed and then kidnapped. She was freed three hours later, but Lau refused to say anything about her ordeal. It was speculated that she was afraid to call in the police because of fear of reprisal.

Nude bombshell

East Week got more attention than it bargained for.

After publication of the issue on Tuesday last week, the Hong Kong Newspaper Evaluation Association condemned *East Week's* handling of the photo story. It said: "This is an open insult to the victim and is against the ethics of news media. This story strays into pornography". The association called upon the public to boycott the magazine.

Tung Chee-hwa, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, got in on the action by issuing a statement saying the story violated the moral values of Hong Kong.

Facing mounting public condemnation and pressure, *East Week* released two statements, last Friday (November 1).

The first statement was bullish, suggesting hypocrisy on the part of the magazine's accusers. "After receiving the photo, we decided to cover the story based on the facts. Other papers and magazines then

followed up the story, going into even greater detail."

Indeed, *Three Weekly* magazine also faces legal censure as it also ran the story and the picture.

But if *East Week's* statement was intended to defuse the row, it backfired. The entertainment industry furiously denounced the magazine, saying it was trying to shirk its responsibility.

A more contrite statement was released later on Friday, the magazine admitting it was "completely wrong....we apologize to the victim and all Hong Kong citizens."

Victim speaks out

But the controversy showed no sign of abating.

On Sunday afternoon, more than 500 people staged a demonstration. The crowd included Anita Mui and Jacky Chan, who railed against the intrusiveness of Hong Kong's media.

Carina Lau initially kept quiet, but with encouragement from friends she stepped back into the public eye.

Lau appeared at the gathering accompanied by her boyfriend Tony Leung (Ka Fai). She did not say she was the person in the photo but delivered a speech regarding the incident.

She said: "I came over here to say one thing to people who care about me and love me as well as to those who want to hurt me: I am stronger than I realized I could be. If this can make people recognize how important the media and its ethics are, the hurt I have experienced and the damage to my dignity is nothing."

Later, Lau issued a written statement in which she said the worst was over and that she would carry on without fear. Lau said she hoped that if a similar case arose again, the media would show a bit more concern for the victims and their families.



Carina Lau speaks out at the rally, Sunday.

Media regulation?

Though *East Week* has been shut down and most of its 200 employees fired, the anger has not abated and there have been calls for new laws to regulate Hong Kong's media.

Hong Kong's economy is going through a rough period and advertising in particular has been squeezed. This has forced the region's media industry into ever more desperate measures to boost circulation.

"The media is respected and trusted by the public," says Wu Siyuan, director of the Hong Kong Movie Workers Association. "However, some people seem to have no conscience and will do shameless things to make money. We feel sad and angry about this incident. Has Hong Kong degraded itself to this level?"

(Edited by Ivy Zhang)

Follow-up Coverage

Is Pornography Legal?

By Ivy Zhang

In a humiliating reversal for local police, Baota District People's Procuratorate in Yan'an city, Shaanxi has thrown out their case against a local man accused of watching pornographic VCDs and obstructing justice.

The Procuratorate announced on Monday that the arrest order for the man, surnamed Zhang, would not be granted. This meant Zhang was able to go home after 14 days

of detainment.

When Zhang and his wife were watching pornographic VCDs at home on August 18, four police officers came around to confiscate the disks. The police claimed Zhang had attacked one of the policemen with a rolling pin and he was arrested. He was released on bail the next day but was arrested again about two months later on October 21 on a charge of obstructing justice.

Design by Accident



By Zhao Pu

It was all meant to be so different. A respectable career using English beckoned, either as a translator or an editor. But one flunked exam led to a very different path. Colleagues and family may despair, but in Wang Yun's heart there is no doubt. Marketing manager is the day job for now, but every weekend, Wang Yun nurtures her own fashion design studio.

A new life in half an hour

Half an hour is a short time, but long enough to change one's fate in some circumstances. Had it not been for a slip 14 years ago in her college entrance exam, Wang would probably have become a translator or English editor.

She'd been doing pretty well in English in her middle school, getting highest marks in exams. "I planned to major in English in college, as I liked it and it was a trend at that time for girls to major in foreign languages," says Wang. She applied to study English at Nankai University, a top university in Tianjin, as well as at several other foreign language institutions in Beijing.

"Maybe I was too confident about my English," says Wang. She made a fatal mistake in the English section of the entrance exam for college, missing a 40-point reading section



Window shopping at Oriental Plaza mall

in the test. "When I realized the mistake, it was too late." She did well in maths and other subjects, but failed in English.

This meant she couldn't study English at Nankai or the other universities. Her only choice was her least favored option, the bottom of her list: advertising major at a small college in Haidian District. In the vacation before entering the college, Wang fell into a heavy depression. "I regretted the stupid mistake I made, and I felt hopeless about my future study". She locked herself in



Wang works with Italian designer Liugi Proietti, 2000

her room at home and refrained from meeting friends and former classmates.

But college turned out to be better than she expected. She found

advertising interesting and diverse. "We learned painting, photography and design. All these artistic things I learned at college coincided with my personal interests," she says. Since her years in elementary school, Wang had always been creative. Her four year's study as an advertising major was both inspiring and enjoyable.

It turned out that the advertising market was too small in the early 1990s when she graduated from college. She failed to find a job related to her major, so instead she joined a travel agency as an assistant to the general manager. She answered calls, sent faxes, drafted outlines and made tour schedules, but it had nothing to do with her strengths or interests.

"I can't say that I liked the job in the travel agency, but I worked hard," says Wang. In every annual staff evaluation, she got the highest mark. In the fourth year at the travel agency, she was promoted to the position of marketing manager.

Lingerie liftoff

In 1996, Wang took part in a fashion design contest arranged by Beijing Youth Daily. "The clothes I designed for myself and my younger sister won second prize at the contest, which was a pleasant surprise," Wang smiles. The contest reawakened her love for design and encouraged her to return to art and design.

"1998 was a turning point in my life. I furthered my study in design and quit my job at the travel agency," says Wang. Everybody in the travel agency was surprised by her resignation. "It seemed strange to them that I resigned, as I was one of the most promising managers in the agency. Even my family couldn't understand me. In their eyes, I gave up a good job and wasted my years of hard work," she says.

Despite this pressure, Wang left her comfortable office in Beijing Hotel and rolled up her sleeves for a career in fashion. She took a course in fashion design at Beijing Institute of Clothing Technology and went to classes every week. She also entered a fashion company as an assistant to the general manager. "I wanted to acquire some practical experience at the fashion company first, to help become a real designer," says Wang.

"I used to have a big and cozy office of my own, and a secretary in the travel agency. At the fashion company, I found myself sitting by the door in a shabby room."

At the end of 1999, she took part in a Millennium Underwear Design Contest in Guangzhou. She did it all by herself from the design to sewing every piece of underwear in a series. She adopted some Chinese elements like dragon, and Yin and Yang in her design. She got second place in the contest, among several hundred professional and amateur designers. "The winner was a professor of costume design from Fuzhou University; we became friends after the contest," says Wang. Her success gave her more confidence and she has since taken part in fashion design contests every year.

But her talent for design was not appreciated by her boss and she realized her dream of becoming



Wang and her design — Joyous Rhythm

Photos by Wang Wei



Wang at a fashion design contest in Suzhou, 2002

a designer in the company was not going to work out, so she quit. "However I had learned every process of design and manufacture in that company. Also, I got familiar with the market working as the assistant to the general manager," says Wang.

Before she left the company, she also applied for the designer's position in some other domestic fashion companies in Beijing. "I found these companies were all similar. Most designers have to follow the taste of their boss, and they have little space for real creative designing." Instead of entering a similar fashion company, she became marketing manager at FDS China, an international consulting group, in April 2000.

Besides managing the marketing department, she works as a consultant in the fashion industry. She has been in charge of projects related to clothing in her company. In her work, she got chances to work with some top-class stylists from all over the world, from whom she learned a lot.

C for creative

In the past few years, Wang has never dropped her dream of becoming a real designer. At an expo last year, she saw a book written by the founder of Subway restaurant

chain. "He says you should not wait for everything to be ready to establish your own business, it can be started if you have a real passion for it," Wang recalls. This inspired her to open her own studio.

This summer, Wang set up her fashion design studio in an office building in Fengtai District. She didn't give up her job at FDS China this time. "Though I wish to pour all of my energy into the studio, I believe it's safer to carry on my present job." Her first project was an embroidery training program. She published an advertisement in a shopping info weekly, and received dozens of calls inquiring about the training.

Four students enrolled in her debut training course and they started class in August. Over six weekends, Wang taught her students a variety of lessons related to embroidery. "I arranged lessons on painting, designing, colors and embroidery, teaching them not only embroidery skills, but basic knowledge of aesthetics," says the teacher. Working at her own studio fulfills Wang's ideal of becoming a designer. Moreover, it makes her experience other roles like teacher, organizer and businesswoman.

The symbol of her studio looks like a "C", with a little umbrella and a heart on the top. "C is for creative," Wang smiles. She believes creativity is the most significant element in design. "I had always been creative from when I was a little kid." Wang remembers when she was six years old, she liked a girl's hairstyle in a Japanese movie. So she decided to try out her hairdressing skills on her younger sister. When a friend was visiting her mother, she quietly cut her sister's hair according to the hairstyle she liked. "My mother was furious when she saw my sister's brand new hairstyle." That wasn't all. "I also enjoyed painting on the white walls at home, which annoyed

my parents a lot," she laughs.

Last month, Wang organized her second embroidery training program. (See Page 15 for her third training program.) This time, the four students were from Shanxi Province. "I didn't expect to have students from other provinces," says Wang. It reminded her that she could teach not only Chinese, but also foreigners, as she speaks English well. "So next, I plan to arrange a special training program for foreigners to learn traditional Chinese embroidery," she says.

Next on the list is setting up a fashion club. Anyone interested in fashion will be able to join. "I feel very glad to be following my passion. Just as I read in that article, it's never too late to start."



Wang teaches her students not only embroidery skills, but basic knowledge of aesthetics.

We are inviting contributions for FACE. If you have a story you think we could use, please send us an outline. Our e-mail address: Portrait@ynet.com Our fax number: 65902525

Restoration of an Ancient Glory

Work begins on the Forbidden City's most comprehensive renovation since 1911

By Iris Miao

The debate surrounding the renovation of the Forbidden City has been a media focus nationwide since this March, when a seven-year refurbishment plan was first announced.

The controversy centers not so much on whether or not repair work should be undertaken, but on the actual nature of the refurbishment. Without the constant repairs made to the royal palace complex during the six centuries since the original section was completed in 1420, there would be no Forbidden City today. If future generations are to enjoy this unique monument to the past, proper and careful renovation is the only choice.

Routine renovation work costs in excess of ten million yuan annually. Why then has this seven-year project aroused so much debate?

Underground Exhibition Hall

Much of the discussion centers on whether the palace should be renovated according to a "before 2008 timetable."

A major Beijing-based newspaper, China Youth Daily, recently carried a comment appealing for a public hearing over the issue, arguing that the Forbidden City is a treasure belonging to the whole nation, rather than just a small section of the population.

Aside from a shortage of renovation materials and skilled craftsmen, the divergence focuses on a new underground exhibition hall near the Donghuamen Gate. The museum administration's attitude towards the proposed underground hall is one hundred percent positive. The project has actually "been a dream for generations of the Palace Museum," according to deputy director of the museum Tan Bin.

However some experts insist that the entire foundations of the palace are inextricably connected, and removal of one stone would threaten the stability of the whole structure. To date, there has been no comprehensive scientific analysis of the Forbidden City's foundations.

Evaluation and discussion of the proposed designs are at present making their way up through



Qianqingmen — regular repair work takes place everyday around the palace.

Photo by Chen Bai

various levels of authorities. If the State Development Planning Commission of the State Council authorizes the project, by the year 2008, a 30,000-square-meter subterranean modern palace with constant temperature and humidity will be completed near Wenhua Gate (文华阁), in the south east section of the Forbidden City, which will be used to put more of the museum's vast collection on show to the public.

Following the initial press release announcing the proposed renovations on 18 March, it has taken seven months to officially launch the whole reconstruction project, although renovation work on Wuying Hall, on the southwest side of the complex, near Xihuamen Gate, has been underway for some time.

One hundred million per year

Currently the museum authorities are remaining tight lipped on the issue, and no further details of the renovation plan have been disclosed.

The general aim of the renovation project is to restore the main structures to the way they appeared during the Kangxi — Qianlong period (1662-1795), the heyday of the Qing Dynasty, by use of a combination of traditional craftsmanship and



The white marble balusters in front of Wuying Hall have already been replaced.

Photo by Miao Yajie

modern technology.

The central government has allocated a renovation fund of approximately 100 million yuan per year until 2008, which does not include the budget for the underground exhibition hall.

First stage — restoration of Wuying Hall

Wuying Hall compound in the southwest of the palace complex was first built in 1417. It covers an area of 23,000 square meters and comprises over 60 rooms. It has been chosen for the first stage of restoration for three

reasons. The architecture of the compound is quite representative, in that it is relatively complete in terms of the styles and elements of ancient architecture, and the compound lies in an area still closed to the public, yet with convenient access, so reconstruction will not affect tourism. Lastly, and most importantly, the compound is in such a serious state of decay, reconstruction work can no longer be postponed.

"Experts will be invited to evaluate the renovation while it is underway, problems will be solved during this phase of renovation," says Jin Hongkui, vice president of the museum, "experiences accumulated during the Wuying Hall renovation will benefit the rest of the project."

Renovate from six aspects

Renovation will basically cover six aspects. First, the current concrete bricks and asphalt roads will be replaced with the original style clay bricks. Second, repairs will be made to Wuying Hall, Shoukangong, Cininggong and Cining Garden, which have suffered structural damage. Third, interior decorations such as caissons, ceilings, and trellises will be repaired. Fourth, ancient stone and bronze artifacts in the open air will

be cleaned and measures will be taken to protect them from further deterioration. Fifth, the walls will be repaired. Sixth, improvements will be made to outdated infrastructure, such as fire alarms, security, drainage and electrical systems.

The reconstruction of Wuying Hall is scheduled to be completed by November, 2004.

Technical difficulties

According to ancient architecture specialist Zheng Lianzhang, a former director of the Palace Museum Ancient Architecture Department, there are a number of difficulties concerning restoration work that need to be resolved quickly.

Regarding the raw materials to be used for renovation, some of the technologies have long been lost. For example the pillars in the main halls were painted with a red paint made from a mixture of pig blood, tung oil, and flour. No one nowadays knows the process for preparing the pig blood. The bricks are another example. The traditional method of producing bricks took more than two years. Now efforts are being made to reproduce the high quality bricks in the traditional way, but the technique is still not fully understood.

Another difficulty is the shortage of experienced craftsmen, although this is not an insurmountable obstacle. Finally the renovation workers themselves will require skilled management. With so many workers from outside the museum, the smallest mistake could have disastrous consequences.

A lively platform of culture in the future

The Palace Museum covers an area of 720, 000 square meters, 400,000 square meters of which is built on. When the seven-year project is complete, visitors will not only have access to the marvelous collection of antiques and the grand architecture, but also be able to see how the imperial court operated, and how people once lived in and outside the court.

"The Palace Museum will be a lively cultural platform rather than simply a sample of antiquity," promises Jin Hongkui.



Photo by Zhuang Jian

Qianlong Painting Sold

By Sun Yan

A painting by Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty was auctioned in Beijing Sunday, the first painting by the emperor ever to be offered for auction in China.

The sale of *Tingcao Wenyan Tu (Bulrush and Mandarin Ducks)* by Huachen Auctions aroused a great deal of interest among painting and calligraphy collectors. After several rounds of intense bidding, the painting was sold for 737,000 yuan, much more than the estimate price of 450,000 to 600,000 yuan.

Emperor Qianlong, one of the best known emperors of the Qing Dynasty, was highly regarded for his calligraphy and poetry, however his paintings are rather less celebrated. In fact it is said that his brushwork was so plain that he was reluctant to show his work publicly. Few of his paintings survived his reign, except for a handful that are now in the collection of the Palace Museum.

Tingcao Wenyan Tu was actually copied by the emperor in 1770 from a painting by Zhao Mengfu, an artist of the Yuan Dynasty whose work Qianlong greatly admired. Though clearly not in the same league as the one by Zhao Mengfu, the fact that it is by the emperor certainly increased the painting's value.

According to vice-president of Huachen Auctions, Wei Lijun, the painting has been in an overseas collection for many years. It was authenticated as the original work of Emperor Qianlong by Xu Bangda, a calligraphy and painting appraisal expert at the Palace Museum.

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New Horizons Sought for Sci-Fi

By Yan Xiaosong

When famous science fiction writer Geoffrey Landis visited Beijing in September, invitations were sent to his Chinese counterparts to attend a reception for him. Fewer than 20 writers showed up.

For a long time, science fiction writing has been something of a backwater in the landscape of Chinese literature, however an announcement by Beijing Normal University that it will offer a course in science fiction writing this semester may help change that.

"We want to develop a new study direction in this field in our Chinese Literature Department," says department head Wang Quangen. "In the next year, we will recruit two students who we hope will eventually gain a masters' degree in our department," he says.

"People asked me many details about this course," says Wu Yan, the director of the program. "But I have not yet identified many details. In fact, it is a trial process. So we must try many ways and at the beginning, undoubtedly we prefer to follow the basic rules of Chinese literature.

"Our goal is not only to produce science fiction novelists, but also to drive students to achieve more," continuous Wu. "Students can observe, consider and outline the scientific literature." If the students are creative, Wu believes their high quality works will help develop the science fiction into an individual and impossible to ignore branch of literature that will win commercial success.

Wu Yan agrees that science fiction writing is weak in China. There have been very few authors writing science fictions novel since the middle of the 1980's. Among these novelists, only Pan Shuzheng is well known from the 1990's, and only Han Song, Wang Jinkang, Xing He and a handful of other young writers have emerged in the field.

What is lacking is not simply writers. Today there are only two magazines,

Science Fiction

World and Science Fiction King addressing the field. Two thirds of newly published science fiction novels are translations, while original Chinese works seldom see print runs exceeding 20,000.

"Traditional culture is obviously an obstacle," says Liu Bei a professor major in comparative literature. "Science fiction has its roots in western culture. Imagination is encouraged in western cultures. As a result, readers and writers both have a good environment to create and enjoy science fiction literature. China's 2,500 years of Confucianism, however, has had a negative effect on people's imagination. Even today, this historical inertia still affects most Chinese."

Professor Zhang Li of Beijing Normal University believes China's educational system is the main cause for this dearth of science fiction writers.

"As a scientific fiction author, on the one hand one must have profound science and technology knowledge, on the other hand, skill in literature is very necessary. But the mode of Chinese educational makes it impossible to meet the demand," says Zhang.

While in the west, science fiction is popular among a broad spectrum of society, Chinese fans of the genre are mainly teenagers and students. They are too weak in terms of buying power to influence literary trends.

"A strong media industry is the wing of the local scientific literature," says Kong Tong, an independent filmmaker. "The media can greatly benefit the development of science fiction. Hollywood is a good example. There is a solid chain linking writers to audiences. Writers have the opportunity to win rich commercial returns. If such a circle forms here, wonderful works will spring forth."

What Direction for Chinese Music?

By Zhu Lin

The Fifth Beijing Music Festival wrapped up with a sell-out performance by Chinese vocalists on Saturday. Enthusiastic applause saw off not only the artists performing at the closing ceremony, but all the Chinese musicians during the festival.

"We aim at building up a recognizable style of Chinese music and musicians for our festival," says Yu Long, artistic director of the music festival. Critical and popular response suggests success in this regard, but the future and direction of the Chinese music industry remains a hotly debated topic.

In recent years, Chinese musicians have started to step into the mainstream of contemporary music. Most of composer Chen Qigang's works have been premiered by leading symphony orchestras around the world. It seems his works were always heard first in the west, but now that has changed. Chen's Wu Xing made its world premiere at the Beijing Music Festival.

Chen's October 20 concert at the Poly Theatre was a sell out. After the concert of Tan Dun's music at the last Beijing Music Festival, works by both Chen Qigang and Ye Xiaogang were performed at this year's festival. As one group of music graduate students in 1982, the three are among the most successful Chinese musicians active in international music circles. "Chen's subtle music catches your nerve from the very beginning to the end," commented Li Cheng from Beijing Morning Post after the concert, "He really catches the essence of Chinese culture and western contemporary composing technique."

There were many other concerts that made a breakthrough in terms of broadening repertoire or diversity in performing. At the festival's opening concerts on October 11 and 12, Chinese orchestras and choirs performed Mahler's Symphony No. 8 for the first time in Beijing, involving some 1,000 musicians.

Despite the success of such performances, however, it is almost impossible to find CDs by these composers in China. Ye's music is available internationally on Vergo, a boutique

German label, of which Ye is the only contemporary Chinese composer represented. However he does not have a contract with a Chinese label. "I'm looking for a local CD company to release my music," says Ye, "but still haven't found one."

Besides the disregard of the recording industry, there are too few organizations and companies in China to promote and support contemporary composers. At the Beijing Music Festival, the concert of Japanese Taiko, the traditional drum playing in Japan, was sponsored by Nippon Taiko Foundation. Largely due to the efforts and funds provided by the foundation, today more than one thousand professional and amateur Taiko groups are active in Japan.

China is rich in traditional music resources, but the type of funding or sponsorship enjoyed by the Taiko performers is rare here. "There are no professional foundations to help the Chinese music groups," said Zhang Ligang from the China Performing Arts Agency, "especially with the marketing and managing work."

Chason Culture and Development Company is the only company in Beijing representing contemporary composers in classical music. One of their clients, Bright Sheng, is another outstanding Chinese composer. Reviewing Sheng's opera Silver River, Chicago Tribune wrote in August 2000, "Sheng and librettist David Henry Hwang have fashioned a music theater fable of great charm and imagination."

"Now we can't get much profit by managing that kind of music in China. Composers like him rarely hold concerts here, and mainstream audiences remain unfamiliar with that type of music," says Zhang Kexin, manager of Chason Culture and Development, "But I think that will change. The public will form the habit of enjoying contemporary works. We want to lead the trend of the market of music industry."

The identity of Chinese music has been established, but how this is built is more important. "In order to raise the quality of the music industry in China, both the market and the musicians need more competition," says Yu Long, "We intend to commission more new compositions from contemporary Chinese composers in the future."



Violinist Vera Tsu performs music by Ye Xiaogang on October 15 with the Shanghai Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Hu Yongyan.

Jin Xing Crosses Over Again

By Yu Shanshan

Modern dance may not be too popular with Beijing audiences, but artists and critics have welcomed *Cross Border* with open arms. The show was performed at The North Theatre from November 1 to 3.

British pianist Joanna MacGregor and Chinese dancer and choreographer Jin Xing have been working alongside video artist Kathy Hinde and sound designer Matthew Fairclough to create a vibrant multimedia experience reflecting modern-day life.

The hectic rhythm of city life and uptight urban mentalities are central themes, evoked from an east-west, female point of view. The one hour performance involves a specially devised score by MacGregor, incorporating jazz, classical, electronic and African music with traditional Chinese instruments, and a dance choreographed and performed by Jin Xing. "Joanna uses the piano to give texture while I dance to draw out the picture of life," Jin said.

The production also has a screen as a backdrop on which images of city life from Beijing are projected.

Jin Xing is known both at home and abroad for her challenging dance performances as well as her choreography. Some of her works like *Red and Black*, and *Sunflower* have won high praise, with dance critic Ou Jian Ping calling them "milestones of Chinese dance". In 1996 she founded the Jin Xing Dance Theatre, which accompanied her in *Cross Border*.



Photo provided by British Council

Woman of Huizhou

By Wang Chunzhu

Selected as a bride at fifteen, a girl begins the lonely journey of her arranged marriage. This is the story of *Woman of Huizhou*, which is being performed at Beijing's Chang'an Opera Theatre until November 20.

The opera is set in an isolated village in Huizhou about 100 years ago. In order to show his strong disapproval



Han Zaifen in Woman of Huizhou

for arranged marriage, a young man leaves his hometown on the eve of his wedding day. His intended bride spends her whole life in her husband's family. Full of hope and expectation at first, the fifteen-year-old bride keeps waiting for her husband to

return.

It is the 100th performance of *Woman of Huizhou* by An Qing Huangmei Opera Theatre and the third time the company has performed it in Beijing. The opera is unusual in that there is no complicated plot of direct conflict between any of the characters. The audience's attention is focused on the main character (played by Han Zaifen). The shift of focus from the plot to the main character makes it a more human story.

The traditional style for Huangmei Opera is light comedy, so this dark tragedy is quite a change of tone.

When: until November 20 **Where:** Chang'an Opera Theatre **Tel:** 6510 1307

Teen Fantastic at MTV Asia Awards

By Wang Chunzhu

Both S.H.E. and Twins, the two hottest girl bands in South East Asia, have been nominated for the second MTV Asia Awards. Luckily, they will not have to compete with each other because S.H.E. are in the category for Chinese Taipei and Twins in the one for Chinese Hong Kong.

Along with S.H.E., there are four other nominees from Chinese Taipei: Jay, David Zee Tao, A-mei, and Elva. David Zee Tao had disappeared from the public eye for a long time, but the release of his latest album gained him a nomination for the Most Popular Singer from Chinese Taipei award. Jay has just wrapped up his tour of Chinese Taipei and is busy preparing for shows in the Chinese mainland, Chinese Hong Kong and Singapore.

From Chinese Hong Kong, last year's most popular singer Sammi Cheng has been nominated once again. So audiences will have to choose from Sammi, Kelly Chen, Eason Chan, Miriam Yeung, and Twins.

In the Singapore category, new R&B outfit Urban Exchange will challenge Stefanie Sun, who has released five albums in the last three years. Other nominees are A Do, Sun He, and Chan Kit-Yee.

WORLDWIDE



Barbara Walters (R) with Sharon and Ozzy Osbourne

Sharon Osbourne Regrets Doing MTV Show

Sharon Osbourne, matriarch of MTV's first family *The Osbournes*, says the constant presence of cameras in her home has become intrusive as she battles cancer, and she wants to call it quits after 10 more episodes.

"This is definitely the last year," Sharon Osbourne, 50, told Barbara Walters in excerpts of the interview released by Walt Disney Co.'s ABC network on Monday. "We can't do it anymore. ... Another 10 shows and I'm out."

Her remarks raised new doubts about the future of *The Osbournes*, the fly-on-the-wall "reality" series that became MTV's biggest hit, earned an Emmy Award and turned the raucous, foul-mouthed Osbourne couple and their teenage kids into overnight pop culture stars. (Reuters)



Actor Pierce Brosnan in a scene from Die Another Day

Brosnan licensed to kill for a fifth time

"The invitation has been accepted," a very polite Pierce Brosnan tells the reporter of "the invitation" from producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael Wilson to do a fifth James Bond movie — just as his contract expires with the completion of *Die Another Day*.

Beyond this fifth Bond film, Brosnan predicts, "I think it has mileage to go another 20 years." Not with him, he assures—he survived the fourth Bond with "a bit of a knee injury. That was it." (Variety)

Publisher Looks to Resurrect The Godfather

The *Godfather* saga lives on.

Several dozen would-be Mario Puzos tossed their fedoras into the ring to pen a sequel to the writer's Mafia classic *The Godfather*, publisher Random House said on Monday.

Random House said it will review the submissions for a follow-up to Puzo's 1969 saga about an organized crime family, the Corleones, which it proposes to call *The Godfather Returns*. The origi-

nal novel sold more than 21 million copies and inspired a trilogy of movies. (Reuters)

Director Gives All to Second Harry Potter Film

Filmmaker Chris Columbus has a gift for directing children and the earnest American delivers a magical ride full of special-effect thrills in the upcoming *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*.

But it hasn't all been child's play for the 44-year-old Columbus, who is leaving the helm of the movie series after transforming the first two books of J.K. Rowling's best-selling series about the wizarding world into cinematic gold.



The cast of Harry Potter pose with Columbus (L)

"I was putting everything—blood, sweat and tears—into the movies. Physically, I couldn't do the third. I'll die of a heart attack if I do the third film," Columbus told Reuters after a recent screening of the new movie, which had its world premiere in London on Sunday and opens worldwide on Nov. 15. (Reuters)

Winona Doesn't Say

The two-time Oscar nominee, a film star since the age of 14, opted for a non-featured, non-speaking part as the defense rested Monday in her demi-epic shoplifting trial.

Closing arguments were delivered, last-minute maneuvers by the defense and prosecution rejected (including one involving a purported confession), and the case submitted for the jury's judgment, all without Ryder taking the stand in her own defense.

By not testifying, Ryder not only denied jurors her side of the world's most famous shopping spree, but also a good look at her outfit, a heavenly all-cream skirt suit, a change of pace from the cat-burglar black she modeled day after bleak day to the Beverly Hills, California, courtroom last week. (AP)



Actress Winona Ryder arrives at the Beverly Hills courthouse

Zhou Yumin's a Happy Tramp

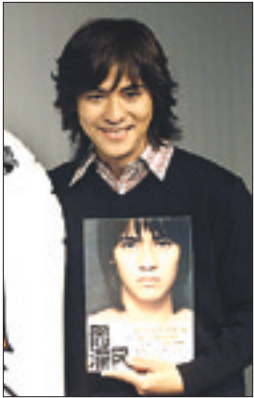
By Wang Chunzhu

Fans of F4 singing star Zhou Yumin may have to wait a little longer to see him in the next series of *Meteor Garden II*, but the Taiwanese idol has just released *The Dream of Tramping* to keep them happy for the time being.

This portrait collection features pictures of Zhou wearing designer gear and indulging in a kind of homeless fantasy in a

series of locations in north Japan. It's sold 280,000 copies in its first three days, showing just how fanatical F4's supporters really are.

The Dream of Tramping is quite a change of image from his usual slick persona but Zhou seems happy. "I'm very satisfied with the photos", he says. "It's so nice to cooperate with professionals."



Zhou Yumin

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BEIJING TODAY
今日北京

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Modern Takes on Ancient Art



A set of dishes similar to those given to US President Bush by Chinese President Jiang Zemin in October Photo by Cui Hao

By Yu Yang

During his trip to America last month, Chinese President Jiang Zemin gave US President Bush a set of porcelain dishes called "Ji Xiang Ru Yi", made in famed Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province. Fortunately for the less stately of us, similar dishes can be found at reasonable prices in the Beijing Oriental Good Friend Jingdezhen Ceramics City.

The large shop is located along the "Snack Street" (Xiaochi Jie) in Wangfujing, and is the only porcelain store run directly by the municipal government of Jingdezhen in Beijing. On display and up for sale are works by modern artists, ranging from exquisite blue and white porcelain, pieces covered in a wide range of colors and eggshell china to sculptures and goods for daily use, all of which are made in Jingdezhen, long known as China's porcelain capital.

The store's first floor is stocked with daily use items, such as dishes, vases and lamps, while the second floor is home to pieces with collection value, similar to Bush's *Ji Xiang Ru Yi* set. The original of that gift contains 146 pieces of porcelain of 48 different types, while the ones on offer in the store come in 28-piece (intended for four diners) and 68-piece (for 10 diners) versions.

Other stand-outs include copies of dishes used at the Shanghai APEC meeting and national banquets. One is even a reproduction of china used by Mao Zedong made in 1975, which fetches the steep price of 90,000 yuan.

Real collectors or the very zealous should look out for the "Ode to the Mother" set of three porcelain vases, made in anticipatory commemoration of the convening of the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. The patriotic vessels were made in a limited run of 16 sets, all of which come with notarized certification of their authenticity.

Where: No.227, Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District

Open: 10:30 am - 9:30 pm
Tel: 6512 4867

Dishing Out Style

By Salinda

There is more to the trendy Houhai area than tea houses and hip bar hangouts. Shopping also draws locals and tourists to stores like Ai Guo Yao, a tiny spot opened by ceramics artist Dong Zi about two years ago. The store is located on the south bank of Houhai, about 30 meters west of Yinding bridge, but its small size makes it easy to miss.

The 10-square-meter store is crammed with cups, bowls, plates, pots and more - each piece a work of art as well as a useful daily object. They were all crafted by Dong Zi herself, and come in a wide range of patterns and colors, priced from several yuan to over 1,000.

The shop's door is embedded with small ceramic pieces, as is the ground leading to the store, giving it an inviting air.

A trained potter and multi-talented artist, Dong Zi has studied and exhibited works inside and outside China. She often goes to Yunnan to seek inspiration.

Dong Zi tries to imbue her work with a Chinese feeling. For example, when she reads a beautiful poem, she selects one Chinese character from the work to draw on a plate or a bowl.

She varies the theme of her works and her store with whatever she loves at a given time. Last year, she was crazy for cats, so she dubbed the store Zen Cat. This year, she went to Shanxi and made a friend named Wang Aiguo, so she changed the name of the store to Ai Guo Yao.

Customers should rest assured that their purchases at the store are the cream of the crop, because Dong Zi chucks works she is not satisfied with in the lake outside the store.

Where: No.14, south bank of Houhai, Xicheng District

Open: 10:30 am - 8:30 pm
Tel: 6651 5392



Bowls with Chinese characters, 40 yuan



Earthen jar, 400 yuan



Depictions of the "Zen Cat", 30 yuan each

Honey, I Shrunk the Bike

By Liang Hongling

Since opening in 1998, the Lei Shen Model store, the largest of its kind in the city, has become a mecca to the city's modelizers. Not people obsessed with runway chattel, that is, but those who find a thrill in the exacting process of creating miniatures from plastic parts.

The store's models can be separated into two main categories, still models and those that can move through remote control. Still models come in a wide range of subjects, such as robots, tanks, boats, helicopters and planes, with military vehicles especially popular.

Modeling is a labor of love and difficult enough to turn away many a first-time modeler. While instructions are included with



each model, getting them to look like what is pictured on their boxes is no small feat.

Remote control models offer more action at far higher prices. Most run on batteries, but some take their own special fuels to run mini combustion engines. Moving miniatures of race cars, planes, ship and helicopters can be had, all made to scale. Among the elite are models from the Japanese brand Kyosho, including one car that can hit a blistering 80 kilometers per hour.

Driving or flying these models doesn't require a license, but

takes great patience, as controlling them can prove tricky.

To give its customers and modeling fans information about new products and suggestions for pursuing their hobby, the store has set up a website at www.LSMODEL.com. Modelers can also find instructional books and videotapes, along with all the paint and other supplies they need to build desktop tanks and cars that can fit on the palm of a hand.

Where: No.202 Chengfulu, Haidian District, opposite south gate of Tsinghua University

Open: 9 am - 8 pm
Tel: 6254 4788



The "San Yang Kai Tai" set of four seals, 8,800 yuan

Photos by Li Shuzhuan

Seals of Approval

By Salinda

Finding presents for executives, officials, or people with large egos has become easier with the opening of a small stall in the sprawling gift market on the sixth floor of Xindong'an plaza. There you can find reproductions of seals actually used by Chinese emperors ready for hanging or display that can give any room a sense of authority.

The 999 stamps on offer are copies of chops pressed on imperial edicts, messages and other works in the collections of the First Historical

Archives of China. Besides their artistic appeal and certain to appreciate value, royal stamps have the added, albeit superstitious, virtue of warding away evil and bringing good luck.

With the new year just several weeks away, the store has a special offer of a set of four seals (8,800 yuan), called the "three positives for ushering in peace," or "San Yang Kai Tai." They are copies of stamped works that the Qing Emperor Qianlong used to write on New Year's Day to bring prosperity to his country and health to his subjects. There are 64 repro-

ductions of writings of Qianlong on offer, all of which are available for collection for the first time ever.

Where: Room 622, sixth floor of Xindong'an Plaza, Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District

Open: 9 am - 10 pm
Tel: 13910157897 contact Peng Ruiyue

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On a chilling winter day in the windy capital, there is almost nothing better than sitting around a table with friends and family and tucking into a steaming meal of hotpot.

Hotpot restaurants in Beijing can basically be divided into two types, Mongolian style and Sichuan. Both go heavy on the mutton (yang rou), which is normally sliced so thin after being frozen that it curls into a tube. The meat is placed into boiling broth in hotpots in the middle of diners' tables until cooked, and then dunked into one of a few varieties of sauces, the most common of which are based on sesame paste or sesame oil. This way of eating is called "shuan" in Chinese, which often receives the unfortunate English translation of "rinse", giving rise to less savvy restaurants slandering their otherwise tasty hotpot with the not-so-appealing name of "rinsed mutton".

Other shuan-ables range from beef, frozen tofu, chicken, fish and prawns, to more exotic items like duck's blood, tripe and spam. Customers can get their greens by also throwing in mushrooms, cabbage, bean sprouts, spinach, or a wide variety of other veggies. In general, if it can be boiled, chances are it can be put in a hotpot somewhere in the city.

Spicy Sichuan hotpot has a soup base that some find spicy to perfection and others find almost lethal. Fortunately, the most common way to eat Sichuan hotpot is to get a pot divided neatly in half, one section containing spicy red broth and the other its meek, white brother. The best known purveyor of Sichuan-style hotpot in Beijing is Jinshancheng, which operates many outlets city-wide.

The soup base in the Mongolian-style version is not spicy, normally being based on vegetables and seafood. Famous Mongolian style hotpot restaurants include Donglaishun on Wangfujing Avenue (covered in the November 1 issue of Beijing Today), and Nengrenju at Baitasi.

Finding hotpots with funkier flavors is a bit more difficult, but not exactly a chore. One of the more successful alternatives is Cantonese-style hotpot, which mixes mild spice with a dose of sweet.

As people's appetites for hotpot have grown, so have the varieties available. One newcomer to the hotpot family is chrysanthemum hotpot (juhua huoguo), in which mum blossoms are added to broth, giving it a nice fragrance. However, the little flowers are not so good to eat.

Wild mushrooms have been turning up in more and more supermarkets, and, not surprisingly, in many hotpot restaurants. Some eateries offer mushroom-based hotpots that can include over 20 varieties of delicious fungus.

Another variation on the theme is seafood hotpot (haixian huoguo). This kind of hotpot differs from others by the inclusion of peanut worms (shachong), small grubs, in the broth. Dishes of fresh seafood, meats and vegetables and then served for dunking. Diners are recommended to eat the seafood and meat separately, as the subtle flavors of fish and shellfish are easily overwhelmed.

A third new entry in the hotpot universe is ox stomach hotpot (maodu hotpot), a product of Sichuan. The broth is a heady concoction including ginger, star anise and Sichuan pepper corns strong enough to negate the need for other sauces.

A foreign variety, hailing from Thailand, has also started appearing on menus in Beijing. In this hotpot, all the vegetables and meats are added at the same time, then fished out with a slotted spoon.

The popularity of all kinds of hotpot in the capital mean that you can almost just throw a stone and hit a hotpot restaurant. One rising trend is buffet-style hotpot restaurants, in which customers pay a set price, commonly around 38 yuan, for all-you-can-eat meat and vegetables for their pots, as well as bottomless beverages and beer in some joints. These restaurants offer solid bang for the buck, but never offer outstanding versions of the beloved dish.



Yuan-yang hotpot at Jinshancheng Restaurant

Photos by Zhuang Jian

Feeling Hot, Hot, Hot

By Wenlong

Jinshancheng Hotpot Restaurant

Though Sichuan-style hotpot restaurants abound, some stick out, such as the Jinshancheng chain. There are 23 of these restaurants around the city, all of which offer top-quality hotpot at reasonable prices.

The branch in the third floor of the New World Shopping Mall is worth a try with its easy-to-reach location and clean and interesting environs.

The eatery's hotpots are seasoned according to the exacting requirements of its Sichuanese chefs. A pot of chili and pepper broth goes for 25 yuan, while the yuan-yang pot of spicy and not-spicy soup costs 20 yuan. The high-quality meat comes cheap at 10 yuan for 200 grams of lamb and 12 yuan for the same amount of beef.

Other offerings include beer duck in broth (*pijiuya huoguo*, 32 yuan) and fish with pickled vegetable broth (*suancai-yu*, 40 yuan).

Open: 10am - 2pm; 5pm - 9:30pm
Tel: 6708 9566 **Add:** 3rd floor, south building of New World Shopping Mall, No.3 Chongwenmenwai Dajie, Chongwen District **Average cost:** 60 yuan per person



Half-spicy, half-not hotpot at Pazi Restaurant

Pazi Hotpot Restaurant

Pazi, which has the double meaning of a person with a limp and well-cooked food in Sichuan dialect, has established a reputation for outstanding hotpot and excellent service. The restaurant supposedly received its name as a joke, since its owner is said to have a problem with his legs.

The specialty of the house is its spicy butter seasoning, made by boiling chilis and other spices in butter until it completely absorbs their flavor. The ingredients are then filtered out, leaving a smooth, potent sauce. A pot of half-spicy, half-not broth costs 38 yuan, beef fetches 25 yuan and lamb 25 yuan for 250 grams, while fish slices run 15 yuan for 150 grams.

Open: 10am - 9pm **Tel:** 8451 0505; 8451 0202 **Add:** No.13 Xinyuanli, Chaoyang District **Average cost:** 55 yuan

Ice-cream Hotpot from Haagen-Dazs

Even in winter, there is no stopping the popularity of ice cream. Fans of frozen confections, however, need to be careful not to eat too many cold goodies, because they can harm their stomachs. To the rescue comes Haagen-Dazs, which is now offering ice-cream hotpot, a gour-



Ice-cream hotpot at Haagen-Dazs

met fix for the ice-cream addicted.

The hotpot is a new take on chocolate fondue - chocolate sauce is heated in an elegant porcelain pot and served accompanied by three plates of ice cream, fresh fruit and cookies. Diners then spear balls of ice cream or pieces of fruit with a fork and dip them in the sweet "broth." Chocolate-ice cream mixtures are especially rich and heady.

Fruits on offer range from standards like banana, strawberry and apple to the more exotic like Chinese gooseberries, and specific fruits can be ordered. This extravagant treat fetches an equally extravagant price at 198 yuan for a two-person set and 238 yuan for an ice-cream hotpot and two coffees.

Open: 10am - 9pm **Add:** International Trade Tower, No.1 Jianguomenwai Dajie **Tel:** 6505 6527. **Add:** 1st floor, International Club, No.21 Jianguomenwai Dajie **Tel:** 6532 6661.

Sorabol Restaurant - Korean Hotpot

The Korean restaurant Sorabol has long been a favorite of Beijing gourmets, especially for its grilled meats. Less noticed are its hotpot offerings, made in authentic Korean style.

Korean hotpot is spiced to near-Sichuan-style levels, but has a very different taste. At Sorabol, hotpots are small and intended to feed just one customer at a time, unlike the collective Chinese versions.

These little hotpots fetch high prices, but are chock full of the freshest ingredients and Korean flavor. Seafood hotpot goes for 70 yuan, ox-intestine hotpot for 95 yuan and beef hotpot also for 95 yuan.

Open: 9am - 10:30pm **Tel:** 6590 6688 ext.5118, 5119 **Add:** 2nd floor, Landmark Tower, No.8 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District **Average cost:** 90 yuan per person



Prickled vegetable hotpot

Review: Hot This Pot Is Not

By Joel Kirkhart

In pursuit of hotpot that qualified as out of the ordinary, six of us headed to the Hangawe Korean restaurant in a strange hotel complex behind the Beijing Hotel. What we got, while unusual, was also nearly inedible.

We first ordered the mixed hotpot (*shijing huoguo*, 58 yuan). What came out was a horrendous glob of pathetic materials not worth a total of 5 yuan between them. It was a pot of broth, perhaps tasty unto itself, tainted with copious chunks of sliced hotdog and spam, topped with a load of instant noodles. Two of us tried, the rest refused. They were the smart ones.

Before that nightmare was put on the table, we had also gone for the seafood hotpot (*haixian huoguo*), a little pricier at 88 yuan. But, infinitely better. The broth was made from Korean-style miso with plenty of spice, meaning it was tasty enough to eat the whole thing from a bowl like a stew. The soup contained some shrimp, little clams, mushroom slices, tofu, crab, fresh greens and fish chunks. The shrimp and fish were both overcooked and felt like they had first been frozen for a decade, while the clams and mushrooms were nice and fresh and picked up some of the richness of the broth. All in all, a satisfying and warming dish, but no great shakes, and definitely not close to replacing even a standard Sichuan hotpot on Dongzhimennei.

Accompaniments to the hotpots were more successful. The cold-mixed snails (38 yuan, *ban hailuo*), meaty but not rubbery chunks of snail mixed with sliced veggies in a sharp sweet and sour sauce, were the best thing served all night. The grilled beef (*kao niurou*, 25 yuan) was also very tasty, but came in a pathetically small serving. Less impressive was the bacon-like *wuhua rou* (25 yuan), which came in a more reasonable portion, but was bland and fatty.

Our meat fix was rounded out by smoked beef rolls, (*heiniurou*, 38 yuan), almost raw slices of beef rolled around veggies, which were good, but the meat flavor was subtle enough to get lost between the vegetables and the wasabi-based dipping sauce. Last was the onion pancake (*congjianbing*, 18 yuan), an unconvincing stab at a Korean staple. The pancakes were laden with onion and very starchy and sticky, as if undercooked or over-floured.

There's no getting around it - this restaurant, despite having relatively reasonable prices in its upscale neighborhood, is not a good choice, unless you have a thing for hotdogs and spam.

Tip: Even though the soup base for hotpot can be very tasty, it is not a good idea to drink it. Dr. Cheng from the Beijing Chinese Medical Hospital says that after being boiled so long, the soup is nearly void of nutrition and can actually contain some chemicals released by ingredients at high temperatures that can be harmful to the body.

Food Cure

By Wenlong

The pomelo is one of autumn's best fruit offerings, both for its taste and its excellent health care effects.

In traditional Chinese medicine, the pulp and juice of the pomelo, which have a refreshing sweet and sour taste, are good for the throat, stomach and spleen. The flesh of the fruit can be used for relieving coughs, pain and vomiting, while its peel and seeds also have medicinal uses. The pomelo flower, rich in fragrant oil, is valuable for producing high quality scented tea.

To extract their medicinal essence, pomelo seeds are pounded into small pieces and then slowly boiled. Pomelo peel is preserved with sugar and made into soup, a brew that can effectively treat car or seasickness and children's stomachaches.

People with throat problems can pick up some old, wind-dried pomelo peeled, which, when boiled in water or tea, makes an easy-to-drink medicine. The remedy is a particularly potent cure for chronic bronchitis, coughing and asthma.

Dining Out

By Wesley Lei /Guo Yuandan

Horizon Chinese Restaurant

Introducing Chef Chung's new menu with more than 200 sweets starting at just RMB5! Many versatile private rooms, and karaoke available. Subject to 15% surcharge. **Where:** Kerry Center Hotel, 1 Guanghua Road, Chaoyang District **When:** November **Tel:** 6561 8833 ext. 41

Garden Court

Seafood and Carvery Nights on Fridays are for seafood lovers, as the best and freshest selection with flavors from the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Singapore, the West and China await you at the Garden Court. Admission: RMB218 includes unlimited juices, coffee or tea; RMB398 includes free flow of Champagne Veuve Cliquot. **Where:** St. Regis Hotel, 21 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District **When:** November **Tel:** 6460 6688 ext. 2340

Hoi Yat Heen Chinese Restaurant

"Dim Sum Lunch", from the northern and southern regions of China as meticulously prepared by a Hong Kong chef. The flavorful fare includes baked turnip cake, braised beef brisket with turnip, steamed spinach dumplings with sweet corn and preserved meat and turnip cake. For every two adults, free dim sum lunch for one senior citizen (please present ID) or one child below 10 years old. **Where:** Harbor Plaza Beijing, No 8 Jiangtai West Road, Chaoyang District **When:** Monday-Sunday, 11:30am-2:30pm **Admission:** RMB75 + 15% surcharge per adult, RMB45 + 15% surcharge per child under 10 **Tel:** 6436 2288

ARIA

Wine up at ARIA on Saturday evening! For RMB260 net per person, experience a four-course menu with free flow wine. **Where:** China World Hotel Beijing, No.1 Jianguomenwai Avenue, Chaoyang District **Tel:** 6505 2266

Piedmont and Its Wine

Da Giorgio's chief Giorgio Papalardo will cook up the perfect meal to match Piedmont-based Michele Chiarlo's wines. Chiarlo himself will be present. Prices vary by order. **Where:** Da Giorgio, Grand Hyatt **When:** November 8, 6:30am-10pm **Tel:** 8518 1234 ext. 3628

Special Sushi Festival

Master Sushi Chef Mitsuo Kawata from Tokyo's renowned Musashin restaurant combines both technical skill and innovation when preparing this popular traditional Japanese cuisine.

Where: Kempinski Hotel, Lufthansa Center **When:** November 8-16 **Tel:** 6465 3388 ext. 4141

The Second "Sagawa Express Cup" Marathon



Kunming Lake



Wenchuangyuan Compound

Join in the second "Sagawa Express Cup" Marathon around Kunming Lake at the Summer Palace on November 17. At the same time, you can inspect the Exhibition of Fine Collections in Wenchangyuan Compound.

Where to register: Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, 97 Nanheyuan Lu, Dongcheng, entries open till November 14

Admission: 20 yuan **Tel:** 6514 0035, 6514 0023 **Fax:** 6513 2654, 6522 1475 **Email:** minxinan@263.net

Music



The set of the performance

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra was established in 1880. This program features Beethoven's *Egmont Overture*, Mozart's Piano Concerto in G Major and Mahler's Symphony No. 5. Conductor: Markus Stenz. Piano Soloist: Geoffrey Lancaster

Where: Century Theatre, Sino-Japanese Youth Center, 40 Liangmaqiao Lu **When:** November 9-10, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 100, 200, 300, 400, 500 yuan **Tel:** 6466 0032

German Chamber Music

The German Bremen Chamber Philharmonic Ensemble has won international critical acclaim since it was founded in 1980. The program for their performance in Beijing includes Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 4, and a piece written especially for the group by Chinese composer Chen Xiaoyong, entitled *Invisible Landscapes*. Conductor: Stefan Geiger, Pianist: Ragna Schirmer

Where: Century Theatre, Sino-Japanese Youth Center, 40 Liangmaqiao Lu **When:** November 8, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 180, 280, 380 yuan **Tel:** 6466 0032



Warrior

Japanese Gagaku Court Music

Japan's Gagaku Troupe will give a performance of this imperial court music that has been carefully preserved and handed down for 1,200 years.

Where: Poly Theatre **When:** November 14, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 100, 150, 200, 280 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7750 ext 508

Tenor Returns

After winning awards in national vocal competitions Fan Jingma was invited in 1987 by the Portuguese president to perform *La Traviata* in Lisbon. Since then he has sung all around the world. After 15 years of performing as a professional tenor abroad, he is now returning to the capital stage for a solo recital.

Where: Poly Theatre **When:** November 14, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 180, 280, 380 yuan **Tel:** 6506 5347

Activities

Montrose Wine School

Learn about wine in a friendly casual atmosphere. Smell, savor and taste a mixed variety of wines in the new St. Regis Wine Lounge. Afterwards enjoy a 10 percent discount meal in any of the St. Regis restaurants.

Where: St. Regis Wine Lounge, third floor of the newest section of the hotel - across from the Astor Grill Terrace **When:** November 12, 7 pm **Admission:** 100 yuan per person **Tel:** 6519 6491



Tianyi Tomb

Visit Eunuch Tomb

Visit Beijing's largest monumental eunuch tomb at Shijingshan. Tianyi was one of the most highly regarded eunuchs of the Qing Dynasty. He served three generations of Qing emperors, and was granted the honor of being allowed to build his tomb in the same style as the Ming Tombs. We will then go to Fa Hai Temple, famous for its ceiling, large murals and huge Buddha statues.

Where: Meet at lobby of China World Hotel 1 pm **When:** November 9 **Cost:** adults 50 yuan, students 40 yuan (includes transportation) **Tel:** 8851 4913 **Email:** Beijing@chinesecultureclub.com

French Corner

A special rendezvous for all French speakers and Francophiles. The Francophile community can enjoy a special evening with wines served by the glass and authentic French food, all in a warm atmosphere. Admission is free.

Where: Le Cabernet French restaurant, near the entrance of the Novotel Peace Hotel, Wangfujing **When:** November 14, 7 pm **Tel:** 6512 8833 ext 6621 **Email:** Liqi@aol.com

Wine Tasting

Sample five high quality red wines. Drink as much as you want over a period of two hours. Snacks available and there is a special discount dinner offer also available.

Where: World Star Restaurant and Wine Bar, Dongdaqiao Lu, north of Guiyou department store, opposite the US Embassy **When:** November 13, 7-9 pm **Admission:** 100 yuan **Tel:** 6593 5651.

Stage



Liyuan Theatre

Shaolin Kungfu

The Liyuan Theatre exclusively presents Shaolin Kungfu performed by the masters of martial arts from the world-famous Shaolin Temple in Songshan Mountain. Buffet is served free.

Where: Qianmen Hotel, 175 Yong'an Lu, Xuanwu **When:** daily, 12:30 pm **Admission:** 80 yuan **Tel:** 8315 7297

Fox and His Son

To commemorate the first anniversary of the death of Japanese composer Dan Ikuma, his opera "Chanchiki" (Fox's Happiness in the Wild Mountain) is to make its debut in Beijing. With the script based on a folktale about a father fox's love and concern for his son, the composer adds comic touches to the music.

Where: Poly Theatre **When:** November 10&12, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 180, 280 yuan **Tel:** 6506 5347

Well-done, You! (Wei Ni Hecai)

This drama is about a multinational company going downhill after 9.11. The Chinese office makes plans to downsize, but the HR manager steps in to

organize the core group of employees, and figures out a feasible approach to save the office.

Where: Central Academy of Drama Theatre, 39 Dongmianhua Hutong, Dongcheng **When:** November 7-8, 7:15 pm **Tel:** 6401 3959

Exhibitions

Print Exhibition

More than 30 works of stone plate, block and copperplate feature in this exhibition by both young and established artists, including Liang Dong, Wang Weixin, Wu Changjiang and others. Collectors in Germany, Britain, China and other countries have purchased their works

Where: Qin Gallery, Hua Wei Li Enjoy Paradise 1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** November 15-30 **Tel:** 8779 0461, 8779 0458 **Email:** qingallery@yahoo.com



Wash painting by Han Shuli

New Era of Wash and Ink Painting

The work of Artist Han Shuli strike a balance between conflict and creating harmony. Jia Haoyi uses the simplest ways to show conflict and strength in his paintings.

Where: Creation Gallery, Ritan Donggu, Chaoyang **When:** November 7-14, 10 am-7 pm **Tel:** 8561 7570 **Email:** keeg_cn@sina.com



Silence by Weijia

Chinese Painting and Print Exhibition

Works by Chinese artists with themes of birds, flowers and architecture.

Where: Wangfang Art Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie Dongcheng **When:** till November 11, 9 am-5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6528 9103 **Email:** newartcenter@163.com **Website:** www.newartcenter.com.cn

Photography Exhibition —Lost in Space

The work of Italian artist Giada Ripa di Meana moves nimbly between photography and video in external settings in search of place, time, and light.

Where: Italian Embassy-Cultural Office **When:** November 12-29, Monday-Friday, 9 am-1 pm / 2 pm-5 pm **Admission:** free

Cosmos

Drawings by celebrated Portuguese artist Eduardo Nery from the 1960s and 1970s, alongside his newer work from 2000 and 2001. A number of his paintings partially and intentionally destroyed by fire are also show.

Where: Jintai Art Museum, 1 Nongzhan Nanlu, Chaoyang **When:** November 7-13, 9 am-5 pm **Tel:** 6532 4795



The passage of time

New Photographic Works by Hai Bo

By means of the camera, Hai Bo evokes the sense of distant times belonging to a personal past involving relatives, friends and thus the artist himself in an authentic and intense recalling of sensations and subtle feelings. This new solo show collects old images and brand new ones that reflect the changes in people, society and the passage of time.

Where: China Art Archives and Warehouse **When:** November 8-24 (Wednesday-Sunday) 1-6 pm **Tel:** 8456 5152

Traditional ceramic tiles

Exhibition of ceramic works by 12 Portuguese contemporary artists

Where: Exhibition room of Portuguese Cultural Center **When:** till November 15, 4 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 4795

Works from Song Zhuang Artist Village

The artist village of Song Zhuang is home to nearly 300 artists. They come from various regions of China and their work is far away from the mainstream.

Where: Blue Dream Gallery **When:** till November 30, 9 am-12 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6959 5367

Lecture

Tibetan Buddhist Relics

A series of lectures about thangkas and religious relics, including the relationship between thangkas and Lamaism. Includes English translation and coffee break.

Lecturer: Wang Yuegong, Palace Museum religious relics scholar.

Where: Luo Yang Room, 2/F, Kempinski Hotel **When:** November 10, 2 pm-4:30 pm **Admission:** 200 yuan **Tel:** 84518767 **Email:** craac@craac.org, lhdbj@public.bta.net.net **Website:** www.craac.org



Embroider

Chinese Embroidery

Learn the art of Chinese embroidery. Lessons every Saturday, starting November 16, for 16 weeks. English and Chinese.

Where: Beijing Sunny Wang Fashion Design Studio, 66 Dongdajie, Fengtai **When:** November 16, 10 pm **Cost:** 900 yuan per person, included lunch and paraphernalia **Tel:** 6381 1878, 13911520083

Rural Life

Anthropologist Eric Miller will show slides and answer questions based on his one-year fieldwork in a village in Zouping County, Shandong Province. Topics will include weddings, funerals, and the situation of the elderly in this area.

Where: Lee's Antique Carpets, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** November 10, 2-4 pm **Tel:** 8851 4913 **Admission:** adults 50 yuan, students 30 yuan **Email:** Beijing@chinesecultureclub.com

Movies



Bedridden Esther

The Silence

Ingmar Bergman conveys the emotional isolation of two sisters who travel to a foreign land together, in his 1963 production, *Tystnaden* (The Silence). *Bedridden Esther* is physically fragile and lives in fear of rejection. While she indulges in cigarettes and drinks to forget her pain, her sister Anna, seeks intimacy through physical contact. Swedish with English and Chinese subtitles.

Where: Space for Imagination, 5 Xiwangzhuang Xiaoqu, Haidian **When:** November 9, 7 pm **Admission:** 5 yuan **Tel:** 6279 1280

Voyage in Italy

Roberto Rosselli casts Ingrid Bergman as a woman who finds herself alone with her husband in a foreign land eight years into their marriage. Away from the structure and familiarity of their comfortable life in London, the trip begins to expose the tedium and strain of their relationship. Italian with English subtitles.

Where: Cultural Office of Italian Embassy **When:** November 14, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

The Fat Dancer's Tuesdays

Tuesdays are special for Luisa, a 50 year-old divorcee and brilliant cook: it is not only the day she takes her grandson to the zoo or invites her friend around for dinner, but it also marks her return to dancing after a long hiatus. Portuguese with English subtitles.

Where: Cinema Hall of Lycee Francais de Pekin **When:** November 8, 6:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 3498

Parties



Gudrun Gut

German Techno

An opportunity to dance to the latest German techno music for six hours at the Loft.

DJs: Thomas Fehlmann, Daniel Meeteo, Bus, Gudrun Gut

Where: The Loft, 4 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** November 9, 10 am-November 10, 4 am **Admission:** 80, 100 yuan **Tel:** 6501 7501, 6506 5637

A Night of Bass

Featuring DJ Roobles from London's Kitachi. Roobles has toured with The Prodigy, Roni Size and Reprazent, Asia Dub Foundation, Cypress Hill, Morcheeba and others.

Where: Club Orange, opposite north gate of Worker's Stadium, Chaoyang **When:** November 8, 10 pm **Admission:** 60 yuan **Tel:** 13621006361 **Email:** Deptford-crew@gmx.co.uk

Tropical rhythms

DJ S-Press will be joined by DJ Qian and the mysterious "disc guzzler," keeping the dance floor pumping until late with his tropical style rhythms. Tequila shots for 10 yuan.

Where: Vics, north gate of Worker's Stadium Chaoyang **When:** November 9, 10 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6593 6215

Latin Rhythms

Share a night to remember dancing to all Latin rhythms. Non-stop fun and lots of surprises. Ticket includes dinner buffet, local beer, soft drinks and lucky draw.

Where: Kerry Centre Hotel, 1 Guanhua Lu, Chaoyang **When:** November 9 **Admission:** 390 yuan **Tel:** 6556 4515

Lucky Punks and Scream Present

Local punk rock superstars, Brain Failure (Naozhao) take to the stage to rock mohawks flat on November 8. Local record label Scream hosts an evening of Beijing's baddest rock bands.

Where: Get Lucky, 500 meters east of south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** November 8-9, 9:30 pm **Admission:** adults 30 yuan, students 20 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109, 6420 4249

Cheerful Time

Happy Street (Xingfu Dajie) plays Cranberries-influenced 'death-folk.'

Where: What Bar, south of University of International Business and Economics **When:** November 9, 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan, includes one beer **Tel:** 13910209249

Blue Jays

DJs Maefu (Germany) and Anthony (Russia) drop disco, progressive, Lounge, house, minimal tribal and deep-techy grooves.

Where: Opposite gate 16, inside Worker's Stadium, Chaoyang **When:** November 8 **Admission:** adults 60 yuan students 50 yuan, including free flow of select drinks **Tel:** 6552 1786

Sports

Seven Beacon Towers Hike

To the north of Huairo is a section of Great Wall with fifteen beacon towers. From the eighth tower there is a razor ridge to the ninth. We will hike up the valley and join the wall at the ninth tower. From the ninth tower we will walk to the fifteenth along the un-restored wall. As always with a wall walk along an exposed ridge, there are rocky bits to climb and difficult boulders to navigate, the rope will be useful at some tricky parts. It is a challenging hike, not too long but quite exhilarating. Travel time is one and half-hours from the Lido, walking time is two to four hours.

Where: Leave at 8:30 am from Lido outside Starbucks, or 9:00 am from Capital Paradise main gate. Return 5:00 pm. **When:** November 10 **Cost:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

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By Guo Yuandan



Wuyang River

By Su Wei
Pillars supporting the sky, slim shy girls, aged women walking in a hurry, tigers waking up to seek food, turtles looking up at the moon — you can find all these things at Wuyang Scenery Reserve (湄阳风景区). Only they're made of stone. The magnificent mountain scenery along Wuyang River is shaped into many different forms, and there's a story behind each one.

Called Zhenyang (镇阳) by local people, the river runs from the Duoding (堵丁) Mountains through Wong'an (翁安), Guizhou and Zhenyuan (镇远), East Guizhou, before emptying into Dongting Lake in Hunan. Eight gorges, with over 400 bays and shoals, divide the reserve into upper and lower parts (Shang Wuyang and Xia Wuyang).

The upper Wuyang
Thirty-six bays, twice the number of those in the lower area, sculpt the 26-kilometer-long upper course of the river, which is several dozen meters wide. Sharp cliffs and precipices tower hundreds of meters above, with birds occasionally peering down from the craggy ridges.

Local people say they have a story for every mountain on the river. Kufu Cliff (哭夫岩) inspires the most touching anecdote. In ancient times, a general who had led his troops on a western expedition met a woman shedding tears by the cliff. The general asked her why she was so sad. The woman said she had never heard from her husband since he was called up to serve in the army. She had followed the army but found only fields littered with corpses and flooded with blood. "He must have met the same end," she wept. The general left without saying anything. Suddenly aware of the peace and beauty around him, he discharged all his soldiers and told them to return to their homes.

Xianren Bridge (仙人桥) is actually a rock shaped like a bridge near Suodong (梭洞) Village. According to legend, it was created by celestial beings. There are some rocks nearby with a series of marks similar to footprints and chessboards. These are said to have been left by the celestial beings, awaiting people to come and finish the game. The Yidu (义渡) Stele at a branch of the river was



Sharp cliffs and precipices tower hundreds of meters above the river



Many waterfalls pour into the river.

built in memory of an ordinary woman of the Qing Dynasty. Angry at the extortionate fee to cross the river by boat, she sold all her fields and houses and built a large boat to take people across the river free of charge.

At Nan'an (南安), there is a series of waterfalls, both large and small. One is called "Double Waterfall" (双飞瀑). It looks like two silver silk ribbons dangling into the river.

The name of Hukou Gorge (虎口峡 Tiger Mouth Gorge) indicates the thrilling ride tourists have in passing the gorges. Beyond, there are wide lakes with an area from 180,000 to 370,000 square meters at Guanyin Dam (观音坝), Suodong Lake (梭洞湖) and Xiaotang River (小塘河), where people can

row their boats casually.

The lower Wuyang
Local people say the one area of Wuyang River that you shouldn't miss is the series of gorges in the lower area, including Zhuge (诸葛), Longwang (龙王), West and East gorges.

Three ivy crags pointing to the sky are named Three Swords Crag. Some local people call them Three-gun Salute as they also look like cannons, ready to be fired. The cliffs and peaks here are also said to form crowing roosters and slim shy girls.

After entering Longwang Gorge, the cliffs on either side



Temples at Qinglong

of the river have many different colors, black mixed with yellow or grey mixed with white. They look like two ancient castles pitted against each other. At Huangyan Pond (黄堰塘), there is a ridge around 10 meters high and 400 meters long which is dark red with several black strokes.

In the lower part of Longwang Gorge are two stone pillars called

Peacock Crests (孔雀峰). One is large and high and the other is small and short. The larger one with a height of 54 meters and diameter of 16 meters looks like an upright tail of a peacock. The smaller one is like the raised head of the peacock.

The narrowest part of Wuyang River is at Gao Gorge (高峡), which is 30 meters wide. It gets its name, Crystal Mirror, from the particularly still waters here.

The last scene of Wuyang River is Zhenyuan, a town with a history of 2,000 years. It is famous for its ancient sights, especially Qinglong Cave (青龙洞), Zhongyuan Cave (中元洞), Heping Village (和平村) and Sigong Palace (四宫殿). The temples and palaces here combine the culture of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism.

Qinglong Cave refers to a group of over 30 separate stone or limestone caves, which are hidden by ancient trees and Chinese wisteria. These caves are in an area about 80 meters wide and



Old houses in Zhenyuan



300 meters long from the foot to the top of Heshan Mountain.

Tips:
Local customs: The minority people here are very hospitable and tourists are sometimes invited to join them for meals.

Accommodation:
Few restaurants are available but family hotels are common.

Transportation:
Take T61 or T87 from the West Beijing Railway Station, get off at Kaili (凯里) then take a 2-hour bus ride to Zhenyuan. Trains from Beijing

to Kaili or Guiyang both pass Zhenyuan but don't stop there. There are trains from Guiyang to Zhenyuan taking around 5 hours.

There are buses at Zhenyuan Bus Stop taking tourists to the ferry crossing for the 1-hour sightseeing of the lower part of Wuyang River (the lower part is highly recommended).

Around 40 yuan per person for a boat carrying four people.

Fees: About 60 yuan for the major sightseeing spots along Wuyang Scenery Reserve. 10 yuan for Qinglong Cave.

Hidden History



The doorway of the well preserved north gate is overgrown with weeds.

By Jerry Ho
Zijing Guan (紫荆关) is one of the nine most important passes on the Great Wall. Guan are frontier passes that were of high military importance in China's history. Some of the passes have evolved into towns or even cities. Shanhai Guan and Jiayu Guan, at the east and west end of the Great Wall, are now medium-sized cities.

Located in Yi County of He Bei Province, Zijing Guan is not far from Beijing. Drive along the Jing Shi Express Highway (京石高速) as far as the Gao Bei Dian Exit (高碑店出口) and turn in to the state highway No. 112, passing the famous Western Qing Tombs. A high mountain can be seen straight ahead. A zigzagging road leads to the town of Zijing Guan at the top of the mountain.

First built in the Han Dynasty, it used to be called Wu Ruan

Guan. It got the name of Zijing in the Jin Dynasty as redbud used to flourish here and it has kept the name ever since. It was rebuilt in the Ming Dynasty. It's a somewhat less magnificent sight today, as remains of the ramparts have been merged into the houses of local people. The walls are all dilapidated and garbage can be seen everywhere. Weeds grow among the black stones of the wall. Among all the passes on the Great Wall, Zijing Guan is the only one where stone was used to build the walls (the others were built with bricks).

Though little remains of the walls, the two gates on the north and south side are still worthy of a visit. The north gate opens toward the Ju Ma River. There are plaques on the two gates which are said to have been made in the Ming Dynasty. Both gates served as the main passageway for the local people, but now the doorways are filled with farm tools and firewood. The south

gate used to be a complex consisting of three gates, but now the biggest one to the far south, Nan Tian Men, does not exist anymore. The enormous Nan Tian Men used to bear a plaque marked "Grandest Pass to the South of the Capital".

A small road cut into the cliff leads to the edge of the mountaintop. The Great Plain of North China spreads beneath. There used to be a famous ancient road linking the plain and the mountaintop, but now it has totally disappeared.

Zijing Guan used to be of high military significance for the defense of China against intruding tribes from the north and some great battles were conducted here. The local government has decided to restore Zijing Guan to something resembling its former glory.

Tips:
1. Jing Shi Express Highway and State Highway No. 112 will lead you to Zijing Guan. Traffic on the highway is heavy with trucks. En route, you can visit the West-

ern Qing Tombs, Nan Hu reservoir and a pagoda built in honour of ancient warrior Jing Ke.

2. Zijing Guan is somewhat hidden among civilian residences so it is advisable to ask local people for directions. Accommodation is available in the town.

3. On the way back to Beijing, you can take a different route. Drive along Bao Ping highway (宝平高速) for 34kms and turn into State Highway 108 at Yudou (玉斗) to take a scenic route which twists through great



Zijing Guan is surrounded by beautiful scenery. Photos by Chai Qingchun